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OF HISTORY IN MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY
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The plan of Bannockburn has been recast to accord with recent investigation, and that of Trafalgar has been redrawn in the light of the Admiralty Committee of 1913's Report.

Jan. 25th, 1927.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	v
LIST OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES	xxxviii
LIST OF MAPS AND PLANS	
LIST OF GENEALOGICAL TABLES	xli
TABLE OF KINGS AND QUEENS	xliii
LIST OF THE CHIEF MINISTRIES SINCE 1639	775-776
INDEX	778

BOOK I

DATE		
Up to 1066.	BRITAIN BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST	1-81
Up to 55 B.C.	Chapter I. Prehistoric and Celtic Britain	1-5
	The Palæolithic Age	1
	The Neolithic Age	1
	The Iberians	2
	The Celts	2-3
	The Bronze and Iron Ages	3
? 330 B.C.	The Voyage of Pytheas	4-5
55 B.C.-449 A.D.	Chapter II. Roman Britain	6-15
55-54 B.C.	Julius Cæsar's Invasions of Britain	6-7
43-85 A.D.	The Roman Conquest of Britain	7-9
85-410.	Roman Rule in Britain	9-14
78-85.	Julius Agricola	9
	The Two Roman Walls	9-10
	Roman divisions of Britain	10
	The garrison and the roads	11
	Roman Civilisation	11
	The Romano-British Church	12
	Decay of the Roman Power	12
	The Barbarian Invasions	14
410.	End of the Roman Power in Britain	14
410-449.	The Picts, Scots, and Saxons	15
	Permanent results of Roman Rule in Britain	15

DATE		----
449-607.	Chapter III. The English Conquest of Southern Britain	16-25
	The Jutes, the Saxons, and the Angles	16
	The beginnings of England	17
	The Jutish Settlements	18
	The Saxon Settlements	18-19
	The Anglian Settlements	19
	The fate of the Britons	20-21
	The Welsh	21-22
	The beginnings of Scotland	22
	Conversion of the Picts and Scots	22-24
	Why England became the strongest	24-25
597-821.	Chapter IV. The Early Overlordships and the Conversion of the English to Christianity	26-38
	The first steps toward English Unity	26
	The Heptarchy	26
	The first English Overlords	27-28
	The Celtic Church	28-29
	Pope Gregory the Great	29
597.	The Landing of Augustine	29
	The Conversion of Kent and Essex	30
627.	The Conversion of Edwin	30
627-685.	The Northumbrian Overlordship	30-35
	Aidan and the Scottish Mission	32
626-655.	Penda of Mercia	31-32
	Conversion of the rest of England	33
	Dispute between the Roman and the Celtic Churches	33
664.	Synod of Whitby	33
668-690.	The work of Theodore of Tarsus	34
716-821.	The Overlordship of Mercia	35
802-899.	Chapter V. The West Saxon Overlordship and the Danish Invasions	39-49
	The rise of Wessex	39-40
802-839.	The Reign of Egbert	39-40
	Beginnings of the Danish Invasions	40-41
839-858.	The Reign of Ethelwulf	41
	The Norse Migrations	41-43
858-899.	The Sons of Ethelwulf	43
	Settlements in England and the continent	43
878.	Wessex saved by Alfred	44
886.	Alfred and Guthrum's Peace	45
	The Dane law	45-47
	West Saxon Supremacy under Alfred	47-49
	Alfred's Reforms	48-49

899-978.	Chapter VI. The Successors of Alfred and the Beginnings of the English Monarchy	50-56
899-924	Edward the Elder, the first King of the English	50-51
	The sons of Edward the Elder	51-52
924-940	Athelstan	51-52
937	The Battle of Brunanburh	52
940-946.	Edmund the Magnificent	52
946-955.	Reign of Edred	52-53
955-975.	The Reigns of Edwy and Edgar	53-54
	Archbishop Dunstan	53-56
975-978.	The Reign of Edward the Martyr	55-56
978-1042.	Chapter VII. The Decline of the English Kingdom and the Danish Conquest	57-61
978-1016	Reign of Ethelred, the Unready	57-59
	Renewal of Danish Invasions	57-58
1002.	The Massacre of St. Bruce's Day	58
1013.	The Invasion of Swegen	58
1016.	The Struggle of Cnut and Edmund Ironside	59
1017-1035.	Cnut, King of Denmark, Norway, and England	59-60
	The Great Earldoms	60
1035-1042	Reigns of the Sons of Cnut	61
1042-1066.	Chapter VIII. The Reigns of Edward the Confessor and Harold	62-72
1042.	Accession of Edward the Confessor	62
	Normandy and the Normans	63
	The House of Godwin	64-65
	Harold, Earl of the West Saxons	65
1066.	The Death of Edward the Confessor	66
	Harold made King	66
	Harold defeats Harold Hardrada	68
	Landing of William of Normandy	69
	Battle of Hastings	69
449-1066.	Chapter IX. English Life before the Norman Conquest	73-81
	Agriculture and land tenure	73
	Thegns, Ceorls, and Theows	74
	Towns	74
	Houses	75
	Food and Drink	75
	Architecture	76
	Laws	76
	The Shires	77

Hundreds and Townships	77
Law Courts	77
The King's Officers	78
Frithborh and Tithing	79
The King	79
The Witenagemot	79
The Church	79
Language and Literature	80
Books recommended for the further study of the Period	80-81

BOOK II

1066-1215. THE NORMAN AND ANGEVIN KINGS 82-158

1066-1087. Chapter I. William I. the Conqueror . 82-93

1066-1071. The Norman Conquest	83
1071. Hereward subdued	84
The Establishment of Feudalism	85
William and the Norman Barons	86
The Palatine Earldoms	87
The Forests	87
1075. The Baronial Revolt	87
1079. Revolt of Robert suppressed William and the English	
1086. The Domesday Book	
1086. The Oath at Salisbury	90
The Normans and the Church	90-92
William as overlord of Britain	91-92
Foreign Policy of William	93

1087-1100. Chapter II. William II. Rufus . . 94-101

The Sons of William the Conqueror	94-95
1088. Baronial Revolt	95
1095. Revolt of Robert Mowbray	95
Ranulf Flambard	96
1093. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury	97
William II. and Anselm	97-99
William II., Scotland and Wales	99
1092. Conquest of Cumberland	99
William II. and Normandy	100-101
1095. The First Crusade	100
1100. Death of Rufus	101

1100-1135. Chapter III. Henry I. . 102-110

Early Measures of Henry I.	102-103
Henry I. and the Normans	103-104
1101. Robert's revolt	103

DATE		PAGE
1102.	Fall of Robert of Bellême	103
1106.	Battle of Tinchebray	104
1103-1107.	Quarrel of Henry and Anselm	104-105
	Henry I. Scotland and Wales	106
	Henry and Louis VI. . . .	107
	Roger of Salisbury and the Administrative System	107
1120.	The Loss of the White Ship	108
	Normandy and Anjou	108
1135.	Death of Henry I. . . .	109
1135-1154.	Chapter IV. Stephen of Blois	111-115
1135.	Accession of Stephen	111
1138.	Battle of the Standard	112
	Beginnings of Civil War	112-113
	The Rivalry of Stephen and Matilda	113
	Desolation of England	113
	Geoffrey of Mandeville	114
1141.	The Battle of Lincoln	114
1153.	The Treaty of Wallingford	115
1154.	The Death of Stephen	115
1154-1189.	Chapter V. Henry II. of Anjou	116-130
	Character of Henry II. . . .	116
	The Restoration of Order	116-117
	Thomas Becket	117-118
1164.	The Constitutions of Clarendon and the quarrel of Henry and Becket	119-120
1170.	Murder of Becket	120-121
	Period of Amalgamation between Normans and English	122
1166.	Henry's Reforms. The Assize of Clarendon	123
1176.	The Assize of Northampton	123
	The Grand Assize	123
1181.	The Assize of Arms	124
1184.	The Assize of Woodstock	124
	Henry II., Wales and Scotland	124-125
	The Norman Conquest of Ireland	125
	The Angevin Empire	126
	Henry II. and his family	127
1159.	The War of Toulouse	127
	The Wars of 1173 and 1174	127-129
	Henry's Foreign Alliances	129
	Rebellions of his Sons	129
1189.	Henry's Death	130
1189-1199.	Chapter VI. Richard I. Cœur de Lion	131-136
	Character of Richard I. . . .	131
1189.	Richard and the Third Crusade	131-133
	Richard's Captivity in Germany	133

DATE		PAGE
1189-1194.	England during Richard's Absence	134
1194-1199.	England from 1194-1199	134-135
1199.	Richard's last Wars and Death	135
1199-1216.	Chapter VII. John Lackland	137-145
	Accession and Character of John	137
	Arthur of Brittany	138
	The Loss of Normandy and Anjou	139
1214.	Battles of La Roche au Moine and Bouvines	139 140
1205.	The Disputed Election at Canterbury	140
1207.	Appointment of Langton	141
	Quarrel of John and Innocent III. . . .	141
1208.	The Interdict	142
1209.	The Excommunication	142
1213.	John becomes the Pope's Vassal	143
1213-1215.	Quarrel between John and his Barons	143-144
1215.	The Great Charter	144
	Renewal of the War of King and Barons	145
1216.	Death of John	145
1066-1216.	Chapter VIII. Feudal Britain	146-156
	The Importance of the Norman Conquest	146
	Britain and the Continent	147
	The King and the Great Council	147
	Local Government	148
	Earls, Barons, and Knights	148
	The Manorial System	149
	Towns and Trade	150
	Fashions of Living	151
	Food and Dress	151
	Norman Castles	152
	Norman Churches	153
	The Beginnings of Gothic Architecture	153
	New Monastic Movements	154
	Twelfth-Century Renaissance	155
	Latin Literature	155
	English and French Literature	156
	Books recommended for the further study of the Period	158

BOOK III

1216-1399.	THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ENG- LISH NATION	159-253
1216-1272.	Chapter I. Henry III. . . .	159-177
1216.	Accession of Henry III. . . .	159
1216-1217.	Conflict between William Marshall and Louis of France	159-160

DATE		PAGE
1217.	The Battle of Lincoln and the Treaty of Lambeth	160
1216-1219.	The Rule of William Marshall	160
1219-1232.	The Rule of Hubert de Burgh	160-161
1232-1234.	The Rule of Peter des Roches	161
1234-1258.	The Personal Rule of Henry	162
	The Alien Invasion—Provençals, Savoyards and Romans	162-164
	Edmund Rich and Robert Grosseteste	164
	Henry's Foreign Failures	165
	The Poitevins in England	165
	Rise of the Principality of North Wales	166
1248-1252.	Simon of Montfort in Gascony	166
	Edmund, King of Sicily; and Richard, King of the Romans	167
	Political Retrogression and National Progress	167
1258.	The Mad Parliament	168
	The Provisions of Oxford	168
1259.	The Treaty of Paris	169
1259-1263.	The Beginning of the Barons' War	169
1264.	The Mise of Amiens	171
1264.	The Battle of Lewes	172
1264-1265.	The Rule of Earl Simon	172
1265.	The Parliament of 1265	173
1265.	The Revolt of the Marchers	174
1265.	The Battle of Evesham	175
1265-1267.	The Royalist Restoration	175
1267.	The Treaty of Shrewsbury	176
1267-1272.	The End of the Reign	176-177
1272-1307.	Chapter II. Edward I.	178-197
	Character and Policy of Edward I.	178
1272-1274.	The Government during Edward's Absence	179
1277.	The First Welsh War	179
1282-1283.	The Conquest of the Principality	181
1284.	Settlement of the Principality	182
1274-1290.	Edward's Legislation	182-185
1289-1290.	Trials of the Judges and Expulsion of the Jews	185
	Scotland under Alexander III.	185-186
1286-1290.	The Maid of Norway	187
1290-1292.	The Scottish Claimants	188
1292.	Accession of John Balliol	188
1259-1293.	England and France	189-191
1293-1295.	The French and Scottish Wars	190-191
1295.	The Model Parliament	191
1296.	The Conquest of Scotland	192
	Clerical Opposition under Winchelsea	192
1297.	Baronial Opposition under Norfolk and Hereford	193
1297.	Confirmatio Cartarum	193
1297.	Scottish Rising under Wallace	193-194
1298.	Battle of Falkirk	194
	Edward's Reconciliation with France and the Church	194

	Reconciliation with the Barons	195
1303-1305.	The Second Conquest of Scotland	196
1306.	Rising of Robert Bruce	196
1307.	Death of Edward I.	196-197
1307-1327.	Chapter III. Edward II. of Carnarvon.	198-204
1307-1309.	Edward II. and Gaveston	198-199
1310-1311.	The Ordinances and the Lords Ordainers	199
1312.	The Murder of Gaveston	199
1307-1314.	Robert Bruce conquers Scotland	200
1314.	The Battle of Bannockburn	200-201
	Thomas of Lancaster	201-202
1322.	The Battle of Boroughbridge and the Parliament of York	202
1322-1326.	The Rule of the Despencers	202
	Isabella and Mortimer	203
1326-1327.	The Fall of Edward II.	203
1327-1377.	Chapter IV. Edward III.	205-227
1327-1330.	The Rule of Isabella and Mortimer	205-208
1328.	Treaty of Northampton	205
1328.	Accession of Philip VI. in France	206
	Character and Policy of Edward III.	208
	David Bruce and Edward Balliol	208-209
1333.	Battle of Halidon Hill	209
	David finally established in Scotland	209
	Causes of the Hundred Years' War	210-211
	Chief Features of the Struggle	212
1339-1340.	The Netherlandish Campaigns	212
1340.	The Battle of Sluys	212
	War of the Breton Succession	213
1346.	The Invasion of Normandy	214
1346.	The Battle of Crécy	214-215
1346-1347.	Calais, Auberoche, Neville's Cross, and La Roche Derien	216
1348-1349.	The Black Death	216
1355-1356.	The Black Prince in Aquitaine	217
	The Battle of Poitiers	217-218
1360.	The Treaties of Brétigni and Calais	218-219
	The Civil War in Castile	219
1367.	The Battle of Najera	221
1369.	The Revolt of Aquitaine	221
1369-1377.	Fall of the English Power in France	222
1351.	The Statute of Labourers	223
1351-1353.	Anti-Papal Legislation	223
	Edward III. and his Parliaments	224
	Edward's Family Settlement	225
	The Court and Constitutional Parties	226

CONTENTS

XV

DATE		PAGE
1376.	The Good Parliament	226
1376-1377.	John of Gaunt and John Wycliffe	227
1377.	Death of Edward III.	227

1377-1399. Chapter V. Richard II. of Bordeaux 228-237

1377-1381.	The Rule of John of Gaunt	228
1378.	The Papal Schism	229
	The Teaching of Wycliffe	229
	Causes of the Peasants' Revolt	229 230
1381.	The Peasants' Revolt and its Suppression	231
	The Baronial Opposition and Thomas of Gloucester	232
1386-1388.	The Attack on and Defeat of the Courtiers	233
1388.	The Merciless Parliament and the Lords Appellant	234
1396.	The Great Truce and the French Marriage	235
1397.	The Royalist Reaction	235
1398.	The Banishment of Norfolk and Hereford	236
1399.	The Lancastrian Revolution	236-237
	The Deposition of Richard II.	237

1216-1399. Chapter VI. Britain in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries 238-253

Mediæval Civilization	238
The King	238
The Parliament of the Three Estates	239
Convocation	239
The House of Lords	239
The House of Commons	240
The King's Council and the Law Courts	241
The Church and the Papacy	242
St. Francis and the Mendicant Friars	242-243
The Franciscans and Dominicans in England	244
The Universities	244-245
Gothic Architecture	245-247
The Concentric Castle	247
Arms and Armour	248
Chivalry and the Orders of Knighthood	249
Cosmopolitan and National Ideas	249
Latin Literature. Matthew Paris	250
French Literature. John Froissart	251
English Literature. Geoffrey Chaucer	251-252
William Langland	252
John Wycliffe and the Beginning of Modern English Prose	252-253
Books recommended for the further study of the Period	253

BOOK IV

DATE		PAGE
1399-1485.	LANCASTER AND YORK	255-307
1399-1413.	Chapter I. Henry IV.	255-260
1399.	The Constitutional Revolution	255
	The Ecclesiastical Reaction	256
	Henry iv.'s Character and Difficulties	257
	Richard II.'s Death	257
	Owen Glendower	257
1403.	Revolt of the Percies	258
	Gradual Collapse of the Risings	259
	Henry iv. and France	259
	The Beauforts and the Prince of Wales	260
1413-1422.	Chapter II. Henry V.	262-268
	Early Measures of Henry V.	262
1414.	Oldcastle and the Lollard Rising	262-263
	Renewal of the Claim to the French Throne	263
1415.	First Expedition—Harfleur, Agincourt	264-266
1415.	The Council of Constance	266
1417-1419.	The Conquest of Normandy	267
1420.	The Treaty of Troyes	267
1421.	Battle of Beaugé	268
1422.	Third Expedition. Death of Henry	268
1422-1461.	Chapter III. Henry VI.	270-283
1422.	Regency of Bedford Established	270
1422-1428.	Bedford's Work in France	270-271
1422-1429.	Gloucester as Protector of England	272
1428.	The Siege of Orleans	272-273
	The Mission of Joan of Arc	273
1429.	Battle of Patay. Coronation of Charles VI.	273
1431.	Martyrdom of Joan of Arc	275
	Coronation of Henry VI. at Paris	275
1435.	Congress of Arras and Death of Bedford	276
	The Peace and War Parties in England	276
1444-1445.	The Truce of Tours and the French Marriage	277
1447.	Deaths of Gloucester and Beaufort	277
1449-1451.	The Loss of Normandy and Gascony	278
1453.	The Battle of Castillon and the End of the Hundred Years' War	278
1450.	Murder of Suffolk	278
1450.	Revolt of Jack Cade	279
	The Position of Richard Duke of York	279
1450-1455.	Beginning of the Wars of the Roses	280
	Characteristics of the Wars of the Roses	281
	The House of Neville	281

CONTENTS

xvii

DATE		PAGE
1455-1459.	Reconciliation and the Renewal of the Strife	282
1460.	York claims the Throne	282
1460-1461.	The Fall of Henry vi. . . .	283
1460-1461.	Battles of Wakefield, Second St. Albans, and Mortimer's Cross	283
1461.	Edward of York chosen King	283
1461-1483.	Chapter IV. Edward IV. . . .	285-293
	Edward iv. and the Yorkist Party	285
1461.	The Battle of Towton	285
	Triumph of Edward iv. . . .	288
	The Nevilles and the Woodville Marriage	288
1469.	Robert Welles and Robin of Redesdale	288
	Alliance of Warwick and Margaret	289
1470-1471.	The Restoration of Henry vi. . . .	289
1471.	The Battle of Tewkesbury	291
	Edward iv., Burgundy, and France	292
	Home Policy of Edward iv. . . .	292
1478 and 1483.	Death of Clarence and Edward iv. . . .	293
1483-1485.	Chapter V. Edward V. and Richard III. . . .	295-299
1483.	Accession of Edward v. . . .	295
	The Deposition of Edward v. . . .	296
	Richard iii. and Buckingham	297
1483-1485.	Richard iii.'s Policy	297
	The Beauforts and the Tudors	298
1485.	The Battle of Bosworth and the Death of Richard iii. . . .	298-299
1399-1485.	Chapter VI. Britain in the Fifteenth Century	300-307
	The Constitution in the Fifteenth Century	300
	The Church. The Universities and Learning	300-301
	Prosperity of the Fifteenth Century	301
	The Towns and Trade	302
	Late Perpendicular Architecture	302-303
	Armours and Weapons	303
	Literature—Poetry—Prose	303-305
	The Invention of Printing. William Caxton	305
	Scotland in the Fifteenth Century	306
	The End of the Middle Ages	307
	Books recommended for the further study of the Period	307

BOOK V

DATE		PAGE
1485-1603.	THE TUDORS	308-419
1485-1509.	Chapter I. Henry VII. . . .	308-316
	Character of Henry VII. . . .	308
	Continuance of the old Party Struggles . . .	309
1486.	Lord Lovel's Rising	309
1487.	Lambert Simnel's Imposture	309
1492.	The Breton Succession, and the Treaty of Étaples	310
1492.	Perkin Warbeck's Imposture	311-312
1497-1499.	The Cornish Rising, and the Execution of Warbeck and Warwick	312
1496 and 1506.	The Magnus Intercursus, and the Malus Intercursus	312
	The European Political System	313
1501.	The Spanish Alliance	313
1503.	The Scottish Marriage	314
	Henry's Domestic Policy. His Ministers . . .	314
	Reduction of the Power of the Nobles . . .	315
	Welsh and Irish Policy	315
1494.	Poynings' Law	316
1509-1529.	Chapter II. Henry VIII. and Wolsey . . .	317-336
	Character of Henry VIII. . . .	317
1510.	Execution of Empson and Dudley . . .	318
	The King's Ministers. Rise of Wolsey . . .	318-319
	Foreign Politics	319-320
	Henry joins the Holy League	320
1512-1513.	War all over Europe	320
1513.	Battles of the Spurs and Flodden . . .	321-322
1514.	Peace with France and Scotland . . .	323
	The Young Princes	323-325
	Rivalry of Charles v. and Francis . . .	325
	Wolsey's Foreign Policy. The Balance of Power . .	326
1520.	The Field of the Cloth of Gold	326
1521-1525.	War with France	327
	The Triumph of Charles, and the French Alliance . .	327
1521.	The Fall of Buckingham	328
	The King and the Commons	328
	The Renaissance	329
	State of the Church	329
	The Oxford Reformers	330
	Erasmus and More	330
	Wolsey and the Church	331
1517-1529.	The Beginnings of the Reformation . . .	332
	Luther, Zwingle, and Calvin	332-333
	Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn . . .	335

CONTENTS

xix

DATE		PAGE
	The Origin of the Divorce Question . . .	335
	The Decretal Commission . . .	335
1529.	The Fall of Wolsey . . .	336
1529-1547.	Chapter III. Henry VIII. and the Beginning of the Reformation . . .	337-351
	Progress of the Divorce Question . . .	337
	Henry VIII. and his Subjects . . .	338
1529-1536.	The Reformation Parliament . . .	338
	Henry Supreme Head of the Church . . .	338
1532-1534.	The Separation from Rome . . .	339
	Cranmer and the Divorce . . .	339
	Henry VIII. and Protestantism . . .	340
	The Resistance to the Supremacy . . .	340
	The Charterhouse Monks and Reginald Pole . . .	341
1535.	More and Fisher Executed . . .	341
	Cromwell Vicar-General . . .	341
	State of the Monasteries . . .	342-343
1536.	The Suppression of the Smaller Monasteries . . .	343
1536.	The Pilgrimage of Grace . . .	343
1536-1539.	The Suppression of the Greater Monasteries . . .	344
	The English Bible and the Growth of Reforming Opinions . . .	345
	The King and his Wives . . .	345
1538-1547.	Conspiracies . . .	346
1539.	The Six Articles . . .	346
1540.	Anne of Cleves and the Fall of Cromwell . . .	347
1540-1547.	The Reactionary Period . . .	348
1542-1545.	War with Scotland . . .	348
1544.	War with France . . .	349
1545-1547.	The New Wave of Reformation . . .	349
	Catharine Howard and Catharine Parr . . .	349
	The Fall of the Howards . . .	349
	Henry VIII. and Ireland . . .	350
1536.	Union of England and Wales . . .	350
1547-1553.	Chapter IV. Edward VI. . .	352-360
1547.	Somerset becomes Protector . . .	352
1547.	Invasion of Scotland. Battle of Pinkie . . .	353
	Postponement of the Scottish Reformation . . .	354
1548.	Loss of Boulogne . . .	354
1549.	Progress of the Reformation. First Prayer-Book . . .	355
1549.	The Devonshire Rebellion . . .	356
1549.	Ket's Rebellion . . .	356
1549.	Fall of Somerset . . .	357
1549-1553.	The Ascendancy of Warwick . . .	357
	Influence of the Foreigner Reformers . . .	357
1552.	The Second Prayer-Book of Edward VI. . .	358
1553.	The Forty-two Articles . . .	358

	Failure of the King's Health	358
	Edward's Device for the Succession	360
1553.	Queen Jane and Queen Mary	360
1553-1558.	Chapter V. Mary	361-367
1553.	Accession of Mary	361
	The Work of Edward's Reign Undone	361
1554.	The Spanish Marriage	362
1554.	Restoration of the Papal Supremacy	363
1555-1558.	The Marian Persecution	363
	Martyrdom of Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer	364-365
	Want of Toleration in the Sixteenth Century	365
	Isolation of Mary	366
1552-1559.	War between France and the Empire	366
1557-1559.	England at War with France	367
1558.	Death of Mary	367
1558-1587.	Chapter VI. Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots	368-389
	Character and Policy of Elizabeth	368
	The Queen's Ministers	369-370
	Leicester and the Courtiers	370
	The Elizabethan Settlement of the Church	370
1559.	The Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity	371
1563.	The Thirty-nine Articles	371
1559-1575.	Archbishop Parker	371
	Elizabeth and the Roman Catholics	372
	Geneva and the Calvinists	372
	The Puritans and the Elizabethan Settlement	373
1565.	Parker's Advertisements	373
	The Separatists	374
1576 and 1583.	Archbishops Grindal and Whitgift	374
1593.	Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity"	374
	John Knox on the Scottish Reformation	375-376
	Mary Queen of Scots	376-377
	The Counter Reformation	377
1559.	The Treaty of Le Cateau-Cambrésis	378
	Philip II. and the Counter Reformation	378
	Francis II. and his Queen	379
	Rivalry of Mary and Elizabeth	379
1563.	The Loss of Le Havre	379
1561.	Mary Queen of Scots in Scotland	380
1565.	The Darnley Marriage	380
1566.	Murder of Riccio	381
1567.	Murder of Darnley	381
1567.	Deposition of the Queen of Scots	383
1568.	Mary's Flight to England	383
	Mary's Imprisonment	384
1569.	The Revolt of the Northern Earls	384
1570.	The Bull of Excommunication	385

DATE		
1571.	The Ridolfi Plot	386
	Philip II. and the Revolt of the Netherlands	386
	The Seminary Priests	386
1580.	The Jesuit Invasion	388
	The Bond of Association	388
1586.	The Babington Conspiracy	388-389
1587.	Execution of Mary Queen of Scots	389
1587-1603.	Chapter VII. The Latter Years of the Reign of Elizabeth	390-407
	The Relations between England and Spain	390
	Anglo-French Interference in the Netherlands	391
1581.	The Anjou Marriage Scheme	391
1586.	Leicester in the Netherlands	392
	Spain and the Indies	392
	The Beginnings of English Maritime Enterprise	393
1553.	Chancellor's Voyage	393
	Protestantism and Maritime Adventure	394
1562-1567.	Hawkins and the Slave Trade	394
1577-1580.	Drake's Voyage round the World	396
1584.	The Breach between England and Spain	396
	Philip's Plans for Invading England	397
1588.	The Spanish Armada	397-399
	The Battle off Gravelines	399
	Results of the Protestant Victory	399
1589.	Henry IV., king of France	399
1589-1603.	The War with Spain	400
1596.	The Capture of Cadiz	400
	The First Attempts at English Colonies	401
	Ireland under Mary Tudor	401
	Shane O'Neill and Elizabeth	402
	Ireland and the Counter-Reformation	402
1579.	The Desmond Rebellion and the Plantation of Munster	402
1598.	The Irish Revolt under Hugh O'Neill	404
1599.	Essex in Ireland	404
1600-1603.	Mountjoy suppresses the Rebellion	404
	Steps towards British Unity	404
	The Cecils, Essex, and Raleigh	405
	Continued Persecution of Puritans and Catholics	406
	Elizabeth and her Parliaments	406
1597 and 1601.	The Monopolies Contest	406-407
1603.	Death of Elizabeth	407
1485-1603.	Chapter VIII. England under the Tudors	408-418
	The Beginnings of Modern Times	408
	The Tudor Monarchy	408
	Parliament under the Tudors	408-409
	Harmony between Crown and Parliament	409
	The King and his Ministers	409

	PAGE
The Council	410
The Star Chamber and its Victims	410
Local Government	411
Military Weakness of the Crown	411
Social and Economic Changes	411
The Poor Laws	412
Increase of Refinement and Luxury	413
Education and Travel	413
Renaissance Architecture	414
Other Arts	414
Early Tudor Literature	415
The Beginnings of Elizabethan Literature	415
Spenser and the Poets	416
The First Public Theatres	416-417
Marlowe and the Early Dramatists	417
Shakespeare and his School	417
Elizabethan Prose	418
Books recommended for the further study of the Period	418

BOOK VI

1603-1714. THE STEWARTS	420-533
1603-1625. Chapter I. James I.	420-434
The Union of the English and Scottish Crowns	420
Failure of James' Projects for more complete Union	421
Completion of the Conquest of Ireland	422
1610. The Plantation of Ulster	422
1607 and 1632. Beginnings of English Colonies—Virginia and Maryland	423
1620-1629. The Plantation of New England	423
1609. The Beginnings of the East India Company	424
1623. The Amboyna Massacre	424
The Stewarts and Parliament	425
Character of James I.	425
Robert Cecil and his Enemies	426
1604. The Hampton Court Conference	426
Archbishops Bancroft and Abbot	427
1605. The Gunpowder Plot	427
James and his Parliaments	428
1610. The New Impositions and the Great Contract	428
1614. The Addled Parliament	429
James's Family and Favourites	429
Robert Ker. George Villiers	429-430
James's Foreign Policy	430
1617-1618. Raleigh's Last Voyage and Execution	431
1618. The Beginning of the Thirty Years' War	431
1622-1623. James's efforts to restore the Elector Palatine	432

CONTENTS

XXIII

DATE		PAGE
1623.	Failure of the Spanish Marriage	432
1621.	James's Third Parliament	433
1621.	The Fall of Bacon	433
1624-1625.	James's Fourth Parliament and Death	434
1625-1649.	Chapter II. Charles I.	435-461
	Character of Charles I.	435
1625.	The War with Spain and Charles's First Parliament	436
	Home and Foreign Policy	436
	The French War and Charles's Second Parliament	436
1626-1627.	The Forced Loan and Darnell's Case	437
1628.	Charles's Third Parliament and the Petition of Right	438
1628.	Murder of Buckingham	438
1629.	Dissolution of Charles's Third Parliament	439
1629-1640.	Charles's Arbitrary Rule	439
	Charles's Expedients for raising Money	440
1637.	Ship Money. Hampden's Case	440-441
	Charles's Ecclesiastical Policy	441
	Archbishop Laud and the Puritans	441
	The Victims of Charles's Policy	442
	Thomas Wentworth	442-443
1637.	The Scottish Prayer-book	443
1638.	The National Covenant	444
1639.	The First Bishops' War	444
1640.	The Short Parliament	445
1640.	The Second Bishops' War	445
	The Great Council at York	445
1640.	Meeting of the Long Parliament	446
1641.	Attainder of Strafford	446
1640-1641.	Remedial Measures of the Long Parliament	446
1641.	The Root and Branch Bill	447
1641.	The Incident	447
1641.	The Irish Rebellion	447
1641.	The Grand Remonstrance	448
	The Division of Parliament into Two Parties	448
1642.	The Attack on the Five Members	448-449
	The Rupture between King and Parliament	449
	The Royalist and Parliamentary Parties	449
1642.	The Campaign of Edgehill and Brentford	450-451
1643.	Royalist Successes	450
	First Battle of Newbury	451-452
	Cromwell and the Eastern Association	452
	The Cessation, and the Solemn League and Covenant	452
1644.	Renewed Fighting. Battle of Marston Moor	453-456
	The Destruction of Essex's Army and the Rising of Montrose	457
1645.	The New Model and the Self-Denying Ordinance	457
1645.	The Battle of Naseby	458
1645.	The Battle of Philiphaugh	459

DATE		
1646.	Charles surrenders to the Scots	459
	Presbyterians and Independents	459
	Parliament and the Army	460
	Charles intrigues with the Army and the Presbyterians	460-461
1648.	The Second Civil War	461
1648-1649.	The Triumph of the Independents and the Execution of Charles I.	461
1649-1660. Chapter III. The Commonwealth and the Protectorate		
		462-472
1649.	Establishment of the Commonwealth	462
	Difficulties of the New Government	463
1649-1650.	Cromwell's Conquest of Ireland	463
1649-1651.	Charles II., King of Scots	464
1650-1651.	Battles of Dunbar and Worcester	464
1652-1653.	The Dutch War	465
1653.	The Expulsion of the Rump	465
	The Little Parliament	466
	The Instrument of Government	466
1653-1658.	Cromwell as Protector	467
1655.	The Major-Generals	467
	Cromwell's Puritan State Church	468
	Cromwell's Foreign Policy	469
1655.	The French Alliance	469
1655, 1658.	Jamaica, and the Battle of the Dunes	469
1657.	The Humble Petition and Advice	470
1658-1659.	The Protectorate of Richard Cromwell	470
	The Rump Restored	471
1659.	A Presbyterian Revolt Suppressed	471
1660.	Monk declares for a Free Parliament	471
1660.	The Declaration of Breda and the Restoration of Charles II.	472
1660-1685. Chapter IV. Charles II.		
		473-488
1660-1661.	Work of the Convention	473
1661.	The Restoration Settlement of the Church	474
1661-1665.	The Clarendon Code	475
	The Reaction against Puritanism	476
	The Restoration in Scotland	476
	The Restoration in Ireland	477
	The Restoration and Foreign Policy	477
	The Rivalry of England and Holland	478
1665-1667.	The Dutch War	478
	Growth of the American Colonies	479
1663.	Carolina	479
1667.	New York and New Jers	479
1681.	Pennsylvania	479
1667.	The Fall of Clarendon	481
1667-1673.	The Cabal	481-482

CONTENTS

XXV

DATE		PAGE
1668.	The Triple Alliance	482
1670.	The Treaty of Dover	482
1672-1673.	The Dutch War	483
1673.	The Declaration of Indulgence, the Test Act, and the Fall of the Cabal	484
1673-1678.	The Ministry of Danby	484
1678.	The Treaty of Nijmegen	485
1678-1679.	The Popish Plot	485
1679.	The Habeas Corpus Act, and the Exclusion Bill .	486
1679.	Whigs and Tories. High Church and Low Church	486-487
1679.	Battle of Bothwell Bridge	487
1680.	The Lords reject the Exclusion Bill	487
1681.	The Oxford Parliament	487
1683.	The Rye House Plot	488
1682-1685.	The Tory Reaction, and the Death of Charles II.	488
1685-1688.	Chapter V. James II. . . .	489-495
	Character of James II. . . .	489
1685.	The First Parliament of James II. . . .	489
1685.	Argyll's Rebellion	490
1685.	Monmouth's Rebellion	490
	Breach between James and the Tories	492
	The Dispensing and the Suspending Powers .	492
	The Court of High Commission	493
1685.	The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes	493
	Tyreconnell in Ireland	493
1688.	The Declaration of Indulgence	494
	The Invitation to William of Orange	494
1688-1689.	The Fall of James II. . . .	495
1688.	The Convention and the Declaration of Right .	495
1689-1702.	Chapter VI. William III. and Mary	496-510
1689.	The Accession of William and Mary and the Bill of Rights	496
1689.	The Mutiny Act and the Revenue	497
1689.	The Toleration Act	497
	The Low Church Triumph and the Schism of the Non-Jurors	498
	James's Power upheld in Ireland	498
1689.	Siege of Derry and the Battle of Newtown Butler	499
1690.	Battle of the Boyne	499
1691.	The Protestant Conquest of Ireland	500
	The Revolution in Scotland	500
1689.	Battle of Killiecrankie	501
1692.	The Massacre of Glencoe	501
1689-1697.	The War against France	502
1690-1692.	Battles of Beachy Head and La Hougue	503
1697.	Peace of Ryswick	503
	Financial Policy	503
1694.	Death of Queen Mary	504

DATE		PAGE
1696.	The Bond of Association	505
1696.	The First United Whig Ministry	505
	Beginnings of Cabinet Government	505
1695-1699.	The Darien Scheme	506
1698-1699.	The Spanish Partition Treaties	507
1700.	The Failure of the Partition Treaties	508
1698-1700.	The Tory Reaction	509
1701.	The Act of Settlement	509
	The Constitutional Limitations in the Act of Settlement	509
1702.	The Grand Alliance and the Death of William III. . . .	510
1702-1714.	Chapter VII. Queen Anne	511-523
	Character of Queen Anne	511
1702-1708.	The Rule of Marlborough and Godolphin	512
1702-1713.	The War of the Spanish Succession	512
1702-1703.	The Early Campaigns of the War	512
1703.	The Methuen Treaty	513
1704.	The Battle of Blenheim	513
1704-1706.	Victories of the Allies	515
1707.	The Battle of Almanza	515
1708-1709.	Battles of Oudenarde and Malplaquet	515
1710.	Battle of Brihuega	516
1702-1708.	Party Contests	516
1708-1710.	Marlborough's Whig Ministry	517
1709.	The Impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell	517
1710-1713.	The Tory Ministry	518
1713.	The Treaty of Utrecht	518
	End of the Age of Louis XIV. . . .	520
	The Tory Ministry and the Protestant Succession	520
1714.	The Fall of Oxford and the Death of Queen Anne	521
1699-1702.	Strained Relation between England and Scotland	521
1703-1704.	The Act of Security	522
1704-1707.	The Flying Squadron and the Negotiations for the Union	522
1707.	The Parliamentary Union of England and Scotland	523
1603-1714.	Chapter VIII. Great Britain under the Stewarts	524-533
	Colonial and Commercial Development	524
	Results of the Growth of Trade on England	524
	Manufactures	525
	The Poor and the Poor Law	525
	London and the Towns	526
	Amusements	526
	Communications	527
	Dress	527
	Education	528
	Natural Science	528

DATE

Architecture	529
Painting, Sculpture, and Music	529
The Drama	530
Milton and the Poets	531
Dryden and the Poetry of the Restoration	532
Establishment of Modern Prose Style	533
Books recommended for the further study of the Period	533

BOOK VII

1714-1820. THE HOUSE OF HANOVER AND THE RULE OF THE ARISTOC- RACY	536-641
1714-1727. Chapter I. George I.	536-541
1714. The Accession of George I.	536
1714-1761. The Long Whig Rule	537
The Law and Custom of the Constitution	537
The Cabinet System	537
The Supremacy of the Commons	537
The Whig Aristocracy	538
1715. The Jacobites	539
1715. The Riot Act	539
The Highlands of Scotland	539
1715. The Jacobite Rising	540
1715. Battle of Sheriffmuir and Collapse of the Rebellion	541
1716. The Septennial Act	541
1714-1717. The Whig Ministry	542
1717. The Whig Schism	542
1719. The Peerage Bill	542
1717-1720. Foreign Policy and Alberoni	543
1718. Battle of Cape Passaro	543
1720. The South Sea Bubble	544
The Bursting of the Bubble	545
1721. Walpole Prime Minister	545
1727. Death of George I.	
1727-1760. Chapter II. George II.	546-569
George II. and Caroline of Anspach	546
1721-1742. Character and Policy of Walpole	547
Parliamentary Management	547
Walpole the First Prime Minister	548
The Opposition to Walpole	548
The "Patriot Whigs"	549
The "Boys" and William Pitt	549
Bolingbroke and the New Tories	549
1733. The Failure of Walpole's Excise Scheme	550
1737. The Porteous Riots in Edinburgh	551

DATE	PAGE
1725 and 1731. The Two Treaties of Vienna . . .	551
1738. The Third Treaty of Vienna . . .	552
1739. Outbreak of War with Spain . . .	552
1740-1748. The War of the Austrian Succession . . .	553-554
1742. The Fall of Walpole . . .	553
1742-1744. The Carteret Ministry . . .	553
1744-1754. The Pelham Ministry . . .	553
1743. Battle of Dettingen . . .	554
1745. Battle of Fontenoy . . .	555
1745. Jacobite Revolt and the Young Pretender . . .	555
1745. The March to Derby . . .	556
1746. Battles of Falkirk and Culloden . . .	558
The Subjugation of the Highlands . . .	558
1748. The Treaty of Aachen . . .	559
1748-1754. Pelham's Domestic Reforms . . .	559
1754-1756. The Newcastle Ministry and the Whig Schism . . .	560
William Pitt and the Whig Opposition . . .	560
1756-1757. The Duke of Devonshire's Ministry . . .	561
1757-1761. The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry . . .	561
Origin of the Seven Years' War . . .	561
Commercial and Colonial Rivalry of France and England . . .	562
European Traders in India under the Mogul Empire . . .	562
Dupleix's Plans . . .	563
1740-1755. England and France in India . . .	563
1751. Clive and the Siege of Arcot . . .	563
1757 and 1760. The Battles of Plassey and Wandewash . . .	564
France and England in North America . . .	564
Fort Duquesne . . .	565
1756. The European Coalition against Prussia and England . . .	565
1756-1757. British Disasters . . .	566
1757-1760. Pitt as the Inspirer of Victory . . .	566
1758-1760. The Conquest of Canada . . .	568
1760. Death of George II. . . .	569
 1760-1789. Chapter III. George III. and the War of American Independence . . .	 570-592
Character and Policy of George III. . .	570
George III. and Pitt . . .	571
1761. Pitt driven from Office . . .	572
1761-1763. The Bute Ministry and the Peace of Paris . . .	572
1763-1770. George III. and Foreign Politics . . .	573
1763. The Resignation of Bute . . .	573
1763-1765. The Grenville Ministry . . .	574
Wilkes and the "North Briton" . . .	574
1765. The Stamp Act and the Fall of Grenville . . .	575
1765-1766. The Rockingham Ministry . . .	575
1766-1768. The Chatham Ministry . . .	576
The Renewal of the Wilkes Troubles . . .	576

CONTENTS

XXIX

	PAGE
Burke and Junius . . .	576
1768-1770. The Grafton Ministry . . .	576
1770-1782. The North Ministry . . .	577
Origin of the American Revolution . . .	577
1768-1770. Townshend's Customs Duties and the American Resistance . . .	578
1773. Lord North and the Tea Duty . . .	580
Failure of Conciliation . . .	580
1775. Beginning of the War. Lexington and Bunker Hill . . .	581
1776. The Declaration of Independence . . .	581
Characteristics of the American War . . .	582
1777. The Capitulation of Saratoga . . .	582
1778-1780. The European Attack on Britain . . .	582
Chatham and American Independence . . .	583
1778. Death of Chatham . . .	583
1781. Yorktown and the End of the American War . . .	584
1782. Rodney restores British Naval Supremacy . . .	584
Warren Hastings restores British Supremacy in India . . .	585
1780. The Gordon Riots . . .	585
Ireland imitates America . . .	585
1782. The Legislative Independence of Ireland . . .	586
1782. The Second Rockingham Ministry . . .	586
Burke and Economical Reform . . .	587
1782-1783. The Shelburne Ministry . . .	587
1783. The Treaty of Versailles . . .	587
1783. The Coalition of Fox and North . . .	587
1783. The Coalition Ministry . . .	587
Fox's India Bill . . .	587
1783-1801. William Pitt's Ministry . . .	589
Character and Policy of the Younger Pitt . . .	590
1784. Pitt's India Bill and Warren Hastings . . .	591
Pitt's Foreign Policy . . .	591
1788. The Regency Question . . .	592
1789-1802. Chapter IV. George III. The French Revolution and the Irish Union . . .	593-606
France before the Revolution . . .	593
Voltaire and Rousseau . . .	594
1789. The Meeting of the States General . . .	594
1789-1792. The New Constitution and its Failure . . .	595
1793-1795. The Reign of Terror . . .	595
1792. Europe at War with the Revolution . . .	595
England and the French Revolution . . .	596
The Reaction and Pitt . . .	597
1793-1797. England joins the War against the Revolution . . .	597-598
The Suspension of Cash Payments . . .	598
The Revolutionary War at Sea . . .	599
1798. Buonaparte in Egypt . . .	599
1798. The Battle of the Nile . . .	600

DATE		PAGE
1799.	The Mysore War	600
1799-1801.	The War of the Second Coalition	600
1800-1801.	The Battle of Marengo, and the Treaty of Lunéville	601
	The Armed Neutrality and the Battle of Copenhagen	601
1801-1802.	The Addington Ministry and the Treaty of Amiens	601
	The Pilot that weathered the Storm	602
1782-1800.	Ireland under Grattan's Parliament	602
	The United Irishmen and the French Revolution	603
1793-1794.	The Relief Act, and the Government of Lord Fitzwilliam	603
1798.	Irish Rebellion	604
	Pitt's Irish Policy	604-605
1800.	The Union	605
1801.	Failure of Catholic Emancipation and the Resignation of Pitt	605-606
1802-1820.	Chapter V. George III. and Napoleon	607-625
1803.	The Rupture of the Treaty of Amiens	607
1803-1814.	The Napoleonic War	608
1803.	Emmet's Rebellion	609
1798-1805.	Wellesley establishes British Supremacy in India	609
1804-1806.	Pitt's Second Ministry	610
	The Volunteer Movement	610
1804-1805.	The Army of England, and the Supremacy of the Seas	610
1805.	Battle of Trafalgar	611
1805-1806.	The Third Coalition and its Failure	612
1806.	Death of Pitt	612
1806-1807.	Ministry of All the Talents	612
1806.	Death of Fox	613
1807.	The Resignation of Grenville	613
1807-1830.	The Long Tory Rule	613
	The Conduct of the War	614
1807.	The Treaty of Tilsit	614
	The Continental System	614-615
1808.	The Spanish Rising against Napoleon	615
1808.	Arthur Wellesley's Conquest of Portugal	616
1808-1809.	The Failure of Sir John Moore	617
1809.	The War between France and Austria	617
1809.	Walcheren and Wagram	618
1809.	The Battle of Talavera	618
1810.	Torres Vedras and Busaco	620
1811.	Fuentes de Oñoro and Albuera	620
1812-1813.	The Russian, German, and Spanish National Revolts	620
1814.	The Fall of Napoleon	621
1812-1814.	The War with the United States	621
1815.	The Hundred Days	622
1815.	Pattle of Waterloo	622-623

CONTENTS

XXXI

DATE		PAGE
1815.	The Congress of Vienna	623
1815-1820.	England after the Peace	625
1820.	Death of George III.	625

1714-1820.	Chapter VI. Great Britain during the Eighteenth Century: The Industrial Revolution	626-639
	Commercial Ascendency of Great Britain	626
	The Age of Inventions	626-627
	Roads, Turnpikes, and Tramways	627-628
	Navigable Rivers and Canals	628
	The Factory System and the Industrial Revolution	628-630
	The Agrarian Revolution	630-631
	Pauperism and the Corn Laws	631
	The "Age of Reason"	632
	The Methodist Movement	632-633
	The Evangelical Movement	633-634
	Religion in Scotland	634
	Humanitarianism and Philanthropy	634-635
	Social Life	635
	Art	636
	Poetry and the Drama	637
	Prose	637-638
	The Romantic Revival	638-639
	Books recommended for the further study of the Period	639

BOOK VIII

1820-1901.	NATIONALITY AND DEMOCRACY	642-727
------------	-------------------------------------	---------

1820-1830.	Chapter I. George IV.	642-649
1820.	Accession of George IV.	642
1820.	The Trial of Queen Caroline	643
1820.	The Cato Street Conspiracy	643
	The Old and the New Tories	643
1822.	The Canningites admitted to Office	644
	Canning's Foreign Policy	644
	The Holy Alliance	644
	The Revolt of the Spanish Colonies and the Monroe Doctrine	645
	Canning and the Greek Insurrection	645
1827.	Battle of Navarino	646
	Peel's Reforms as Home Secretary	646
	Huskisson's Commercial and Financial Reforms	647
1827.	Canning's Ministry and Death	647
1827-1828.	The Goderich Ministry	647
1828-1830.	The Wellington Ministry	647
	The Catholic Association and the Clare Election	648

DATE		PAGE
1829.	Catholic Emancipation . . .	648-649
	Wellington's Foreign Policy . . .	649
1830.	Death of George iv.	
1830-1837.	Chapter II. William IV.	650-656
	Democracy and Nationality . . .	650
1830.	Revolutions on the Continent . . .	650
	The Agitation for Parliamentary Reform . . .	651
1830.	William iv. and the Grey Ministry . . .	651
	The Need for Parliamentary Reform . . .	652
	The Reform Movement under George iv. . .	652
1831-1832.	The Struggle for Reform . . .	653
1832.	The First Reform Act passed . . .	653
	Irish Repeal and the Tithe War . . .	654
1832-1835.	Other Reforms	654
	Palmerston's Foreign Policy . . .	655
1834.	The Melbourne Ministry . . .	655
	Peel and the Conservative Party . . .	655
1837.	Death of William iv.	656
1837-1865.	Chapter III. Victoria—Peel and Palmerston	657-673
	Separation of England and Hanover . . .	657
	Queen Victoria and Prince Albert . . .	657
	The Changed Conception of the Work of the Monarchy and House of Lords . . .	658
	Socialism and Chartism	659
1835-1841.	Melbourne's Ministry	659
1841.	Conservative Reaction	660
1841-1846.	Foreign Policy of the Peel Ministry . . .	660
	Young Ireland. Peel's Irish Policy . . .	661
	The Corn Laws and Popular Unrest . . .	662
1839.	The Anti-Corn Law League	662
	Peel and Free Trade	663
1845.	The Failure of the Irish Potato Crop . . .	663
1846.	The Repeal of the Corn Laws	663
1846.	Fall of Peel	664
	Peelites, Protectionists, Liberals, and Radicals . . .	664
1846-1852.	The Russell Ministry	665
1846-1847.	The Irish Famine and its Consequences . . .	665
1848.	The Year of Revolutions	666
1848.	Chartism and Young Ireland	666
	Palmerston's Foreign Policy	666
1851 and 1852.	Dismissal of Palmerston and Russell . . .	667
1852.	The First Derby-Disraeli Ministry . . .	667
1852-1855.	The Aberdeen Coalition Ministry . . .	668
	Nicholas i. and the Eastern Question . . .	668
	Origin of the Crimean War	669
1854-1856.	The Crimean War	669
1855-1858.	Palmerston's First Ministry	671

DATE		
1858-1859.	The Second Derby-Disraeli Ministry	671
1859-1865.	The Second Palmerston Ministry . Italian and German Unity .	672 672
1861-1865.	The American Civil War . Palmerston's Foreign Policy .	672 673
1865.	The Death of Palmerston and its Results	673

1865-1886. Chapter IV. Victoria—Gladstone and Disraeli 674-685

1865.	Beginning of the Transition to Democracy	674
1865-1866.	The Russell Ministry and the Reform Bill	674
1866-1868.	The Third Derby-Disraeli Ministry	675
1867.	The Second Reform Act	675
	The Fenians	676
1868-1874.	The First Gladstone Ministry	676
1869.	Disestablishment of the Irish Church Irish Land System	676 676-677
1870.	The First Irish Land Act	677
1870.	The Education Act and Other Reforms	677
1870-1871.	The Franco-German War and its Results Gladstone's Foreign Policy	678 678
1874.	Fall of Gladstone	679
1874-1880.	The Disraeli Ministry	679
	The Home Rule Movement	679
1877-1878.	The Russo-Turkish War	680
1878.	The Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin	681
1879.	The Dual Contest in Egypt	681
1880.	Fall of Beaconsfield	682
1880-1885.	The Second Gladstone Ministry	682
	Its Irish Policy	682
	Egypt and the Sudan	683
1885.	The Death of Gordon	683
1884-1885.	The Third Reform Act	684
1885-1886.	The First Salisbury Ministry	684
1886.	The Third Gladstone Ministry	684
1886.	Home Rule and the Break-up of the Old Parties	685

1886-1901. Chapter V. Victoria—Home Rule and the Empire 686-694

1886-1892.	The Salisbury Unionist Ministry	686
	The Plan of Campaign	686
1888-1889.	The Parnell Commission	687
1890-1891.	Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites	687
1886-1892.	Foreign Policy. The Triple and the Dual Alliances	688 688
1887.	The Queen's Jubilee	689
1892-1894.	The Fourth Gladstone Ministry	689
1893.	The Lords Reject the Home Rule Bill Filling up the Cup	689 689

DATE		PAGE
1894-1895.	The Rosebery Ministry	690
1895-1901.	The Third Salisbury Ministry	690
	Armenia and Crete. Other Foreign Troubles	691
1896-1899.	The Conquest of the Sudan	692
1898.	Fashoda	693
	Troubles in the Far East	693
1897 and 1901.	The Diamond Jubilee and the Death of Queen Victoria	694

1820-1901. Chapter VI. The United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century 695-708

Increase of the Functions of the State	695
Central Government	695
Local Government	696
The Army and the Navy	697-698
The Church	698
The Tractarian Movement and its Results	698-699
The Protestant Nonconformists	699
The Roman Catholics	700
The Established Church and the Free Church in Scotland	700
Material Wealth	701
Steamboats	701
Steam Railways and other Inventions	702-703
Social and Industrial Progress	703
Architecture	704
Painting, Music, and Sculpture	705
Natural Science	705
Poetry and Prose	706-707
Education	707-708

1820-1901. Chapter VII. British India in the Nineteenth Century 709-718

	The Indian and Colonial Empires	709
1820.	The Condition of British India	710
1820.	The Condition of the Indian Vassal States	710
1828-1835.	The Governorship of Lord William Bentinck	711
1839-1842.	The Afghan War	712
1843 and 1845.	The Conquest of Sind and the First Sikh War	712
1849 and 1852.	Annexations of the Punjab and of Lower Burma	713
	Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse	713
1857.	Lord Canning and the Indian Mutiny	714
1858.	End of the East India Company	715
1878-1880.	Second Afghan War	716
	India at the End of Victoria's Reign	716

DATE		PAGE
1783-1901.	Chapter VIII. The British Colonies in the Nineteenth Century . . .	719-727
	British Colonies in the Latter Part of the Eighteenth Century . . .	719
	Colonial Expansion during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars . . .	720
	Decay of the West Indies . . .	720-721
	The Emigration Movement . . .	721
	Phases of Colonial Policy . . .	721
1840-1856.	Growth of Colonial Independence . . .	722
	Colonial Federation . . .	722
	The North American Colonies . . .	723
1867.	The Dominion of Canada . . .	723
1901.	The Commonwealth of Australia . . .	723-724
	South Africa . . .	724
	The Boer Republics . . .	724
	The Rand Mines and the Struggle of Boer and Outlander . . .	725
1899	The Boer War . . .	726-727
	The Establishment of British Supremacy . . .	727
	Books recommended for the further study of the Period . . .	727-728

BOOK IX

1901-1918.	THE HOUSE OF WINDSOR . . .	728-765
1901-1910.	Chapter I. The Reign of Edward VII. . .	728-739
	The Coburg-Gotha succession . . .	728
	Character of Edward VII. . .	729
1901-1902.	End of the Boer War . . .	729
1902-1910.	South African Settlement . . .	730
1910.	The Federation of South Africa . . .	730
1902-1905.	The Balfour Ministry . . .	730
1902.	Balfour's Education Act . . .	730
1903.	Irish Land Act . . .	731
1904.	Licensing Act . . .	731
	The Isolation of England . . .	732
1903.	The Convention with France . . .	732
1904-1905.	Russo-Japanese War . . .	732
1905.	The North Sea incident . . .	733
	Edward the Peace Maker . . .	733
	Tariff Reform . . .	734
1903.	Resignation of Chamberlain . . .	734
1905.	Resignation of Balfour . . .	735
1906.	Liberal victory at Elections and Campbell-Bannerman Ministry . . .	735
1908.	The Asquith Ministry . . .	736
1906-1907.	Liberal Education bills—The Liberals and the Lords . . .	736-738
1909.	House of Lords throws out the Budget . . .	738
1910.	General Election . . .	738
	Death of Edward VII. . .	739

	PAGE
1910-1918. Chapter II. George V. and the Great War	740-765
George V. and the House of Windsor	740
The Crown, the Dominions and India	740-741
1910. The Second Election of 1910	741
1911. The Parliament Act and the Lords' Veto	741-742
1911. National Insurance Act	742
1912. Home Rule, Welsh Disestablishment and Reform Bills	742-743
1912. The Session of 1912	743
1913-1914. Ulster and Home Rule	743-744
1914. The Ulster Covenant and the Amending Bill	744
Origin of the Great War	744-745
1909-1912. Continental Troubles. Morocco, the Turkish Revolution, and the Turko-Italian War	745-746
1912-1913. The Balkan League and its Dissolution	746-747
1914. The Crime of Serajevo and its Consequences	747
1914. Britain joins the war	747-748
1914. The Invasion of France	748
1914. The Battles of the Marne and Aisne	748-750
1914. The First Battle of Ypres	750
1914-1917. The Western Campaigns	750-752
1914-1917. The Campaigns against Russia	752-753
1915. The Dardanelles Expedition	753-754
1915-1916. The War in Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Mace- donia	754
1916-1917. The War between Italy and Austria	754
1916. The battle off Jutland and the Supremacy of the Seas	755
The War in the Dominions	755
The Submarine Peril	755-756
The German Policy of Ruthlessness	756
1915-1916. The Asquith National Ministry	756-757
1916. The Dublin Easter Rebellion	757
Lloyd George as the National Leader	757
1916-1918. The Lloyd George Coalition Ministry	757-758
The Organization of the Nation for War	758
1917. Successes and Failures in the West	758-759
1917. The Eastern Victories	759
1917. America joins the War	759-760
1918. The German Spring Offensive	760
1918. The Unity of Command	760-761
1918. Foch turns the Western tide	761
1918. The Submission of Turkey and Bulgaria	761
1918. The Submission of Austria	762
1918. The Reconquest of Northern France and Flanders	762-763
1918. The Armistice	763
1916-1918. Home Problems	763-765
Ireland and Sinn Fein	763-764
The Reform Act of 1918	764
Education and National Reconstruction	764-765

1919.	The Paris Conference	765
	The League of Nations	765
	The Treaty of Versailles	765
	The Treaty of Saint-Germain	766
	The Treaties with Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary	766
1920.	The Treaty of Sèvres	767
	The Renewed Troubles in the West	767
	The Angora Revolt and the Failure of the Treaty of Sèvres	768
1923.	The Treaty of Lausanne	768
	The Difficulties of the League of Nations	768
	The Dominions as States	768
1919.	The Government of India Act	769
1919-1923.	The Indian Diarchy	769
1922.	The Renunciation of the Egyptian Protectorate	770
1918.	The General Election and the Continuance of the Coalition	770
	The Failure of Reconstruction	770
1920.	Welsh Disestablishment	771
1920.	The Home Rule Act	771
1919-1922.	The Sinn Fein Revolt	772
1922.	The Irish Treaty	772
1922-1923.	Establishment of the Irish Free State	772
1921-1923.	Northern Ireland under Home Rule	773
1922.	Fall of the Coalition	773
1922-1923.	The Bonar Law Ministry	774
1922.	General Election	774
1923.	The Baldwin Ministry	774

LIST OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES

	PAGE
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, up to 1066 .	80-81
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1066-1215	158
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1215-1399	253
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1399-1485	307
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1485-1603	418
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1603-1714	533
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1714-1820	639
Books recommended for the further study of the Period, 1820-1901	727-728

LIST OF MAPS AND PLANS

	PAGE
Roman Britain	13
South Britain after the English Conquest (about 607) . . .	23
Map showing position of Nectansmere	36
The Welsh and English Lands in Offa's Time	37
The Voyages and States of the Norsemen up to the Tenth Century	42
England after Alfred and Guthrum's Peace, 886	46
England at the Death of Edward the Confessor	67
The Battle of Hastings	71
The New Forest	101
England and Wales during the Norman Period	109
Plan of Christ Church, Canterbury	121
France in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries, showing the Continental Dominions of the Norman and Angevin Kings .	128
The Crusade of Richard I.	132
Plan of Château Gaillard	135
The Battle of Lewes	172
The Battle of Evesham	175
Wales and the March, showing the growth of the power of Llewelyn (1246-1267)	176
Wales and the March between the Conquest under Edward I. and the Union under Henry VIII.	181
English King's Dominion in France in the Thirteenth Century .	190
The Battle of Bannockburn	210
Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Fourteenth Century	210
The Crécy Campaign, 1346	213
The Battle of Crécy	214
The Battle of Poitiers	218
The English Dominions in France after the Treaties of Brétigni and Calais (1360)	220
Some forms of Mediæval Architecture	246
The Agincourt Campaign	264
The Battle of Agincourt	266
France in 1429.	274

	PAGE
The Battle of Towton	286
England, 1377-1509, illustrating the Wars of the Roses !	290
The French and Netherlandish Borders in the Sixteenth Century	321
The Battle of Flodden	322
Europe at the Time of Charles v.	324
English Bishoprics under Henry VIII.	342
The Battle of Pinkie	353
Scotland in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries	382
The Netherlands in the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century .	387
Voyages and Settlements of the Sixteenth Century	395
The Course of the Spanish Armada	398
Ireland under the Tudors	403
Ireland in the Seventeenth Century	422
England and Wales during the Great Civil War—	
1. May, 1643	454
2. November, 1644	455
The Battle of Marston Moor	456
The Battle of Naseby	458
The English Colonies in North America under Charles II.	480
The South of England, 1685-1689	491
The Battle of Blenheim	514
Europe in 1713	519
Scotland and the North of England, illustrating the Jacobite	
Risings of 1689, 1715, and 1745-1746	557
New England and New France, 1755-1783	567
The Thirteen Colonies in 1765	579
The Battle of Trafalgar	606
Europe in 1810	619
The Battle of Waterloo	623
Europe after the Congress of Vienna (1815)	624
Map to illustrate the Industrial Revolution	629
The Neighbourhood of Sebastopol	670
Egypt and the Sudan	692
India in 1906	717
South Africa in 1899	726
Map of the European Countries engaged in the Great War	749
Map of the Operations on the Western Front	751
The British Empire in 1920	777

LIST OF GENEALOGICAL TABLES

. The Chief Northumbrian Kings	ix
The Danish Kings	65
The House of Godwin	65
The House of Leofric	72
The Old English Kings of the House of Cerdic	157
The Norman and Early Angevin Kings	163
The Provençals and Savoyards	170
The House of Lusignan	171
The Earls of Gloucester	180
The Last Welsh Princes	187
The Scottish Kings, showing the Chief Claimants in 1290	207
The French Kings of the Direct Capetian Line, showing Edward III.'s claim	254
The English Kings from John to Richard II.	261
The House of Lancaster, including the Beauforts	269
The Valois Kings of France, and the Valois Dukes of Burgundy	284
The House of York, including the Mortimers and Staffords	294
The Nevilles	299
The Greys and Woodvilles	325
Charles V. and the Hapsburg Kings of Spain	334
The Howards and Boleyns	358
The Dudleys	419
The House of Tudor	472
The Cromwell Family	507
The Spanish Succession, 1700	534
The Stewart Kings in Scotland and England	535
The Bourbon Kings of France	616
The Buonaparte Family	639
The Pitts and Grenvilles	640
The House of Brunswick-Hanover	

TABLE OF KINGS AND QUEENS

CHIEF KINGS OF NORTHUMBRIA

Æthelfrith, 593-617	27
Edwin, 627-653 .	30-31
Oswald, 635-642 .	31-32
Oswiu, 655-671 .	32-33
Ecgrith, 671-685 .	35

CHIEF KINGS OF MERCA

Penda, 626-655 .	31-34
Ethelbald, 716-757	36
Offa, 757-796	36-37
Cenulf, 796-821 .	38

CHIEF KINGS OF WESSEX

Egbert, 802-839	39-40
Ethelwulf, 839-858	41
Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred, 858-871 .	43
Alfred, 871-899	44-49

THE OLD ENGLISH KINGS

Edward the Elder, 899-924	50-51
Athelstan, 924-940 .	51-52
Edmund, 940-946 . .	52
Edred, 946-955 . . .	52-53
Edwy, 955-959 . . .	53
Edgar the Peaceful, 959-975	54-55
Edward the Martyr, 975-978	55-56
Ethelred the Unready, 978-1016	57-59
Edmund Ironside, 1016 .	59
Cnut, 1017-1035 . . .	59-61
Harold Harefoot, 1035-1040	61
Harthacnut, 1040-1042 .	61
Edward the Confessor, 1042-1066	62-66
Harold, son of Godwin, 1066 .	66-69

THE NORMAN KINGS

	PAGE
William I., the Conqueror, 1066-1087	82-93
William II., Rufus, 1087-1100	94-101
Henry I., 1100-1135	102-110
Stephen, 1135-1154	111-115

THE HOUSE OF ANJOU

Henry II., of Anjou, 1154-1189	116-130
Richard I., 1189-1199	131-136
John, 1199-1216 .	137-135
Henry III., 1216-1272	159-177
Edward I., 1272-1307	178-197
Edward II., 1307-1327	198-204
Edward III., 1327-1377	205-227
Richard II., 1377-1399	228-237

THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER

Henry IV., 1399-1413	255-260
Henry V., 1413-1422	262-268
Henry VI., 1422-1461	270-283
and 1470-1471	289-291

THE HOUSE OF YORK

Edward IV., 1461-1470	285-289
and 1471-1483	291-293
Edward V., 1483	295-296
Richard III., 1483-1485	296-299

THE HOUSE OF TUDOR

Henry VII., 1485-1509	308-316
Henry VIII., 1509-1547	317-351
Edward VI., 1547-1553	352-360
Mary, 1553-1558 .	361-367
Elizabeth, 1558-1603	368-407

THE HOUSE OF STEWART

James I., 1603-1625	420-434
Charles I., 1625-1649	435-461
The Commonwealth, 1649-1653	462-467
and 1659-1660	470-472
Oliver Cromwell, Protector, 1653-1658	467-470
Richard Cromwell, Protector, 1658-1659	470
Charles II., 1660-1685	473-488
James II., 1685-1688	489-495
William III., and Mary II., 1689-1694 }	496-504
William III., 1689-1702	504-510
Anne, 1702-1714	511-523

TABLE OF KINGS AND QUEENS

xlv

THE HOUSE OF HANOVER

	PAGE
George I., 1714-1727	536-545
George II., 1727-1760	546-569
George III., 1760-1820	570-625
George IV., 1820-1830	642-649
William IV., 1830-1837	650-656
Victoria, 1837-1901	657-694

THE HOUSE OF WINDSOR

Edward VII., 1901-1910	728-739
George V., 1910-	740-774

BOOK I

BRITAIN BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST (UP TO 1066)

CHAPTER I

PREHISTORIC AND CELTIC BRITAIN

Chief Dates:

? 330 B.C. The voyage of Pytheas.

1. THERE are few surviving written records of the doings of man in the British Islands which are much earlier than the Christian era. Yet the modern sciences of geology, archæology, and philology prove that these islands had been the dwelling-place of human beings for many centuries previous to that period. The earliest certain evidence of the existence of man in Britain is derived from the discovery of large numbers of rudely shaped flint implements. Some of these have been found in the gravels of river drifts, and others in the caves where early man made his dwelling. A few skulls, discovered along with such primitive tools, show that the dwellers in this remote age were of a low intellectual type. Yet the survival of a rude but spirited drawing of a horse on a flat piece of bone indicates that these savages had the rudiments of an artistic sense. The age in which they lived is called the *palæolithic*, or old stone age. There is little proof that the men of this age had any connection with the later races which successively inhabited Britain.

The Palæolithic Age.

2. Many ages passed away, and more abundant evidence is found of the existence of man in Britain. We pass from the palæolithic to the *neolithic*, or new stone age, where the roughly fashioned tools of the primitive race were replaced by more carefully constructed implements of smooth polished stone. Such neolithic tools include arrow-heads, sharp enough to transfix an enemy, axe-heads called *celts*, scrapers, knives,

The Neolithic Age.

PREHISTORIC AND CELTIC BRITAIN

dress-fasteners, and saws. The care of the men of this period for their dead is indicated by the solidly built *barrows* of long oval shape, wherein huge stones, piled up to form a sepulchral chamber for a whole clan, were then covered in with great mounds of earth. Numerous remains of the dead found in these resting-places suggest that the men of the new stone age were short in stature, swarthy in complexion, and had long narrow skulls of the type called *dolichocephalic*. To these people has been sometimes given the name of *Iberians*, because they have been thought akin to the Basques, the original inhabitants of Iberia or Spain, and some philologists have believed that a few words of their tongue still lurk in some of our most ancient place-names. However these things may be, there is good reason to believe that the blood of this ancient race still flows in the veins of many of those now dwelling in our land.

3. The Iberian inhabitants of Britain were ultimately attacked by a stronger and more ingenious race called the *Celts*. This people belonged to the great *Aryan* family, whose language was the origin of nearly all the civilized tongues of Europe, and of those of a considerable part of western Asia. Their physical characteristics were very different from those of their short and swarthy predecessors. They were tall, fair-skinned, with red or yellow hair, and their skulls were broader, shorter, and more highly developed, belonging to the type called *brachycephalic*. They came to Britain in two great waves of migration. The earlier Celtic wave deposited in our islands the races called *Goidelic*, or *Gaelic*, which are now represented by the Irish, the Scottish Highlanders, and the Manxmen. The second migration was that of the *Brythonic* peoples, who were the ancestors of the Britons, afterwards called the Welsh, as well as of the Bretons of Brittany and the Cornishmen. In each case the incoming race took possession of the richer and more fertile southern and eastern parts of our island, and drove the previous inhabitants into the mountains of the west and north. The Goidels forced the Iberians back into these regions, and were then in their turn pushed westwards and northwards by the incoming Britons. By the time that our real knowledge begins, the Britons had occupied the whole of the south and east, and the mass of the Goidels had been driven over sea to Ireland, and to the barren mountains of the north beyond the Forth and the Clyde. There was still, however, a strong Goidelic element along the western coasts of southern Britain,

PREHISTORIC AND CELTIC BRITAIN

especially in the south-west peninsula, which now makes Cornwall and Devonshire, in south Wales, and in the lands round the Solway.

4. It is to these western and northern lands that we must look if we would study the older populations of the British islands. The Goidels, when driven into the west, seem to have become amalgamated with the Iberians whom they had earlier pushed into those regions. The result of this was the development there of two physical types which have survived to our own days. The incoming Celt is still represented in Ireland, Wales, and the Scottish Highlands by occasional tall, fair men; but the most usual type in those districts is that of a short, dark-haired, dark-complexioned race, which is probably largely derived from the blood of the pre-Celtic inhabitants of our land. But for both types alike, the Celtic language and the Celtic institutions became universal. There was, and is, however, a great difference between the Goidelic speech of the earlier Celtic migration, still spoken by some of the Irish, Manx, and Scottish Highlanders, and the Brythonic tongue of the later immigrants, still surviving in Welsh and Breton, and, till the nineteenth century, in Cornish.

5. Civilization now steadily progressed, though it is almost impossible to say for certain whether the next great steps forward were the work of the earlier or of the later race. The people's increasing care for the dead led them to erect huge circles of great stones, each resembling the stone chamber of the barrow, stripped of its mound of earth, and piled up in magnificent order in mighty megalithic monuments. Of these, Avebury in northern Wiltshire, and Stonehenge on Salisbury plain, are the most famous examples. After the coming of the Celts the fashion of burial changed. Instead of the long barrow, destined to receive the remains of many warriors, short round barrows, each the grave of a particular chieftain or of his kin, became so usual as to be extremely numerous. In these were deposited the bodies, or sometimes the burnt ashes, of the dead, and along with them were put implements of stone and bronze, ornaments of gold, jet, amber, and glass, and pottery, made by hand, and unglazed, but rudely ornamented, and polished by hard rubbing.

6. When this stage had been attained, the stone age was over, and the period was reached when the use of metals was known. This marked an enormous advance of civilization. First came the bronze age, which

was ultimately succeeded by the *iron age*, which has been going on ever since. The Goidel came to Britain in the age of bronze, and at the beginning of the iron age the Britons of the newer Celtic migration had become the masters of the southern part of our island, to which they had given the name of Britain.

7. The Celts were the first inhabitants of our island to attain a respectable level of civilization. They wore clothes, used metal weapons, and delighted in gold and glass ornaments. They tilled the ground, opened up tin and lead mines, and began to trade with their neighbours. They were brave, high-spirited, and enterprising; had a real love of beautiful things, and delighted in war and battle. They were split up into different tribes, each of which had its own king, though occasionally several tribes would join together under a common king, especially in times of danger. The Celts were fickle and quarrelsome, and seldom remained permanently under any other ruler than the chief of their own tribe or clan. The gentry went to battle in war-chariots, drawn by horses, which they managed with extraordinary skill. They protected themselves by bronze helmets and body armour, often beautifully enriched by ornament. Their weapons were the sword, the buckler, the dart, and the axe. The Celts worshipped many gods, and sought to propitiate them by human sacrifices. They held in great honour their priests, who were called *Druids*, and who also were the poets, prophets, and judges of the people. The chief wealth of the nation lay in their flocks and herds, and the population lived for the most part in scattered homesteads. They erected, however, as refuges in times of war, great earthworks called *duns*. Favourite sites for these fortresses were the summits of high hills, from which they could overlook the countryside. The majority of the Britons lived upon the uplands, as the river valleys were swampy, unhealthy, and hard to cultivate; but some of them were fishermen or watermen, like the dwellers in the lake villages discovered near Glastonbury. There was enough intercourse between tribe and tribe for rough trackways to be marked out over the downs and hills from one settlement to another.

8. Though the Druids composed verses, wherein they commemorated the deeds of great men, and set forth the laws and wisdom of their ancestors, the Britons had no books, so that no account of them from their own point of view has been handed down to us. The earliest information that we have of the Britons comes from the travellers'

Early Celtic
civilization.

The voyage
of Pytheas,
? 330 B.C.

tales of Greek explorers from the Mediterranean. Somewhere about 330 B.C., some merchants of the Greek colony of Massilia (now called Marseilles), in the south of Gaul, sent a mathematician named Pytheas to explore the lands on the Atlantic coast of Europe in the hope of opening up a trading connection with them. Among other countries Pytheas visited Britain, sailing through the Channel and all up the eastern coast, and setting down his observations of the country and its people in writings of which, unluckily, only fragments have come down to us. From the voyage of Pytheas a trading connection between Britain and the commercial cities of the Mediterranean was opened up, which soon became important. There were also close dealings between the Britons and their Celtic kinsmen the Gauls, their nearest continental neighbours. Many Gauls settled in southern Britain, and still further raised its standard of refinement. The tin, lead, amber, and pearls of the Britons found a ready market in cities like Massilia, and by this means some vague knowledge of the existence of Britain became spread among civilized people. So active did commerce become that the Britons struck coins of gold and tin, which were rudely fashioned after the models of the Greek monies of the period. So intercourse increased and civilization grew until, nearly three hundred years after the voyage of Pytheas, the advance of the Roman Empire brought Britain into the fuller light of history.

CHAPTER II

ROMAN BRITAIN (55 B.C.-449 A.D.)

Chief Dates :

- 55-54 B.C. Julius Cæsar's expeditions to Britain.
- 43 A.D. Claudius begins the Roman conquest of Britain.
- 78-85. Government of Agricola.
- 122. Hadrian's Wall built.
- 297. Diocletian reorganizes the British provinces.
- 410. Withdrawal of the Roman legions.

1. IN the generations preceding the Christian era the Romans established their dominion over the whole of the lands surrounding the Mediterranean, the centre of the civilization of Julius the ancient world. The last step of this conquest Cæsar's First Expedition was the subjugation of Gaul by Gaius Julius Cæsar, to Britain, between 58 and 50 B.C. Brought by his triumphant 55 B.C. progress to the shores of the Channel, Cæsar learnt that the Britons had afforded refuge to the fugitives from his arms in Gaul, and believed that their sympathy with their continental brethren would make it harder for the Romans to keep Gaul quiet. Accordingly he resolved to teach the Britons the might of the Roman power, and in 55 B.C. he led a small expedition over the straits of Dover, and successfully landed it in Kent, despite the vigorous resistance which the Britons offered to his disembarkation. Cæsar found, however, that the Britons were stronger than he thought, and that he had not brought enough troops to accomplish anything great against them. For the few weeks that he remained in Britain, he did not venture far from the coast. Before long he returned to Gaul, convinced that he must wipe out his failure by conducting a stronger army to Britain as soon as he could.

2. Next year, 54 B.C., Cæsar landed in Britain for the second time. He then took with him more than twice as many soldiers as on the previous occasion. Having established a camp on the coast,

he marched boldly into the interior. He was opposed by Cassivellaunus, king of the tribes dwelling on the north bank of the Thames. The light-armed Britons shrunk from a pitched battle with the Romans, and failed to prevent them from forcing their passage over the Thames. But their swift war-chariots hung upon the Roman line of march, threatened to destroy Cæsar's camp on the coast, and prevented him from winning any very striking triumphs. However, some of the British tribes were jealous of Cassivellaunus. Conspicuous among these were the Trinovantes, his eastern neighbours, dwelling in what is now Essex. This tribe sent envoys to Cæsar, and submitted to him. Alarmed at this defection, Cassivellaunus also made his peace with the Roman general, and agreed not to disturb the Trinovantes. Some of the tribes promised to yield up hostages and to pay tribute to the Romans. Thereupon Cæsar went back to the continent. He had not even attempted to conquer Britain, but he had taught the Britons a lesson, and had prevented them from harming the Roman power in Gaul. (The most enduring result of Cæsar's visits is to be found in the description of Britain and the Britons which he wrote in his famous *Commentaries*.) This is the first full written account of our island that has come down to us. With it the continuous history of our land begins.

Julius
Cæsar's
Second Ex-
pedition to
Britain,
54 B.C.

3. For ninety years after Cæsar's landing no Roman troops were seen in Britain. Increased commerce followed upon the greater knowledge which Romans and Britons now had of each other. The Trinovantes, who remained true to the Roman connection, profited by it to make themselves masters of most of south-eastern Britain. Their power came to a head under their king Cunobelinus, the Cymbeline of Shakespeare and romance. He struck coins which closely imitated those of the contemporary Romans, made Camulodunum (Colchester) his capital, and felt himself strong enough to throw off Roman control. One of his brothers, disgusted at being supplanted, appealed to the Romans for help, but his valiant son Caractacus continued his policy after his death. Thus strained relations ensued between the Romans and the Trinovantes. The promised tribute was not paid; Gaulish rebels were encouraged, and Gaulish fugitives from Roman rule received once more a welcome.

Rome and
Britain,
54 B.C.—
43 A.D.

4. The renewed hostility of the Britons to Rome convinced the Emperor Claudius that the only way of making Gaul secure was by conquering Britain. Accordingly, in 43 A.D., Claudius sent

a strong army to the island, under Aulus Plautius. With his landing the systematic Roman conquest of Britain began. Plautius soon made such progress that Claudius himself visited the country, and witnessed his soldiers taking by storm Caractacus' stronghold of Camulodunum, which soon became a Roman colony—the first in Britain. When Plautius returned to Rome in 47, he had made himself master of the south and midlands as far as the Humber and the Severn. The next governor, Ostorius Scapula (47–52), strove to subdue the Silures and Ordovices, the fierce tribes that dwelt in the hills of southern and central Wales, among whom Caractacus found a refuge after the conquest of his own district. The Roman general defeated Caractacus in a pitched battle, and forced him to flee northwards to the Brigantes of the modern Yorkshire. Surrendered by these to the Romans, the British king was led in triumph through Rome. His brave and frank bearing won the favour of Claudius, who permitted him to end his days in honourable retirement. But the conquest of the Welsh hills was not lasting, and all the Romans could do was to establish a ring of border garrisons at Deva (Chester), Viroconium (Wroxeter), and Isca Silurum (Caerleon-on-Usk), whereby the wild mountaineers were restrained.

5. The Roman conquest of Britain was further advanced by the governor, Suetonius Paullinus (59–62), (who in 61 completed the subjugation of the hill-tribes of the west by the reduction of Mona or Anglesey, the last refuge of the Druids.) A sanguinary insurrection of the Iceni, the clan inhabiting what is now Norfolk and Suffolk, recalled Paullinus. The Iceni King, Prasutagos, who had ruled under Roman over-lordship, made the Emperor his co-heir, jointly with his two daughters. On his death the Romans took possession of his lands, brutally ill-treated his daughters, and cruelly scourged his widow, Boudicca (Boadicea), who strove to maintain their rights. The indignant tribesmen took advantage of the governor's absence to rise in revolt. Camulodunum was stormed, and all the Romans within it put to the sword. A like fate befell Verulamium (St. Albans), the seat of Roman government, and Londinium (London), the chief commercial centre of Britain. The legion that held the northern frontier hurried southwards, but was cut to pieces by the Iceni in the open field. At last Paullinus, fresh from his triumph at Mona, marched eastward at the head of the strong force which had held down the disturbed western frontier. Defeated in a

pitched battle, Boudicca avoided captivity and shame by drinking off a bowl of poison. The suppression of the rebellion completed the reduction of all Britain south of the Humber and east of the Dee and Usk. But the mountaineers of what is now called Wales took advantage of Paullinus' withdrawal to renew their freedom, and for many years the Roman advance northwards and westwards was stayed.

6. The next forward movement was under Julius Agricola, a famous statesman and general, who was governor of Britain from 78 to 85. Agricola's son-in-law, the famous historian, Julius Tacitus, wrote a life of his father-in-law in such detail Agricola, that we learn more of his doings in Britain than of 78-85. those of any commander since Julius Cæsar. (Agricola's first military exploit was to complete the subjugation of the hill-tribes of the west.) Thereupon he turned his arms northwards and subdued the fierce Brigantes, establishing a new camp at Eburacum (York), which soon became the chief centre of the Roman power. Within the next few years he seems to have advanced still further northwards, until he found a natural barrier in the narrow isthmus (which separates the Firth of Forth and Clyde, where he erected a line of forts.) (Not contented with this, Agricola advanced beyond this line into the mountains of northern Scotland, whose wild inhabitants, called then the Caledonians, opposed him vigorously under their chieftain Galgacus. At last, in 84, Agricola won a victory over Galgacus at an unknown place called Mons Graupius. After this he circumnavigated the north coast of Scotland with a fleet, and even talked of conquering Ireland. Next year, however, he was recalled, and his successors took up a less enterprising policy. Even more important than Agricola's victories were the efforts he made to civilize the Britons and spread Roman fashions among them. The sons of the chieftains learned to speak Latin, adopted the Roman dress, and followed their conquerors' habits of life.

7. South Britain remained hard to hold. A revolt annihilated the legion stationed at York, and about 122 the wise Emperor Hadrian, abandoning the northern regions, which The two Agricola had claimed as part of the province, erected Roman a solid wall of stone, fortified by frequent forts, to walls. form a scientific frontier for the region solidly held by the Romans. The line chosen for this purpose ran from the mouth of the Solway to the mouth of the Tyne—roughly speaking, from Carlisle to Newcastle—a distance of more than seventy miles. If

the still narrower frontier-line from Clyde to Forth were too remote to be held with safety, the limits thus chosen were the best that could be found. After nearly seventeen centuries the substantial remains of this great work, stretching across the high hills that separate the valleys of the Tyne and the Solway, still constitute by far the most majestic memorial of the Roman power in Britain. In 143, Lollius Urbicus, the governor of Britain under the Emperor Antoninus Pius, went back to the limits once conquered by Agricola, and erected a new boundary wall between the Forth and the Clyde. Built of sods laid on a basement of stone, the northern wall of Antoninus was a much less solid structure than the wall of Hadrian. It soon became unimportant, as the Romans made few attempts to occupy the barren moorlands that take up most of the region between the two walls. Occasionally the old aggressive spirit revived, and notably between 208 and 211, when the able Emperor Septimius Severus spent four years in Britain, and, like Agricola, waged fresh campaigns against the Caledonians. On his death, at Eburacum, the Roman energies relapsed, and thus the wall of Hadrian became the permanent frontier of Roman Britain.

8. Roman rule, thus established by Agricola and Hadrian, lasted in Britain for more than three hundred years. At first Roman Britain consisted of a single *province*, ruled, like all the frontier districts, by a legate of the Roman divisions of Britain. Emperor. Severus divided the country into two provinces, called Upper and Lower Britain (*Britannia Superior* and *Britannia Inferior*), whose boundaries are not at all clear. At last, the famous emperor, Diocletian, the second founder of the Roman Empire, included Britain, about 297, in his general scheme for the reorganization of the provinces. The number of British provinces was increased to four, *Britannia Prima*, *Britannia Secunda*, *Flavia Cæsariensis*, and *Maxima Cæsariensis*. To these a fifth, *Valentia*, was afterwards added. We are almost entirely in the dark as to the situation of these provinces. A special novelty of Diocletian's reforms was the bringing together of neighbouring provinces into larger administrative divisions, called *Dioceses* and *Prætorian Præfectures*. All British provinces were joined together in the diocese of Britain, ruled by a *vicar*, while the diocese of Britain was but a part of the great prætorian præfecture of the Gauls which extended over the whole of the west. This system lasted as long as the Roman power.

9. The Roman occupation of Britain was mainly military. The

land was strongly held by a garrison of three legions, each consisting of about 5000 regular troops, all Roman citizens. One legion, the Sixth, had its headquarters at Eburacum, while the Second was quartered at Isca Silurum, and the Twentieth at Deva, in positions which they had held from the first century onwards. ^{The Roman garrison.} Besides these regular troops, a large number of irregular auxiliaries garrisoned the wall of Hadrian and the detached forts of the north. Both legions and auxiliaries were largely recruited on the continent, and most Britons who wished to serve the emperor were drafted to fight upon the Rhine or the Danube. Well-constructed roads, paved with stone, ran straight from garrison to garrison, and also served as avenues of commerce. The most famous of the Roman roads of Britain was the *Watling Street*, which ^{Roman roads.} ran from the coast at Dubræ (Dover) to Londinium, and thence by Verulamium to Viroconium, from which point a branch went south to Isca, while the main road proceeded to Deva, where it sent a branch to Segontium (Carnarvon). From Deva, *Watling Street* was continued eastwards to York, and thence to the frontier. The *Ermine Street*, the central part of the road that connected Eburacum with Lindum (Lincoln), Camulodunum, and Londinium, was only less famous; while the *Watling Street* was crossed diagonally by a third great artery, called the *Fosse Way*, which went from Lindum to Isca Dumnoniorum (Exeter). A fourth road, named *Akeman Street*, connected Camulodunum and Verulamium with the watering-place of Aquæ Sulis (Bath).

10. Along the chief routes grew up walled towns, which, at least in the south and east, were not wholly military in character. Under the strong Roman peace, marshes were drained, forests cleared, and commerce furthered. Britain be- ^{Roman civilization in Britain.} came one of the chief granaries of Europe, and its iron, tin, and lead mines were extensively developed. Salt-works were opened, and pottery and fine glass were made. Many Roman officials, soldiers, and traders spread the use of the Latin tongue, and, at least in the southern and eastern parts of the province, the upper classes among the Britons themselves learnt to talk Latin, and were proud to be considered as Romans. But the Romans never romanized Britain as they had romanized Gaul. The best proof of this is the fact that the Celtic tongue continued to be spoken by the mass of the people, as is shown by its continuance in Wales to this day. In Gaul, on the other hand, the use of Latin became universal, and quite displaced the ancient Gaulish language.

11. During the fourth century Christianity became the religion of the Romans, and Constantine, the first Christian emperor (306-337), first took up the government of the Empire at Eburacum, where his father had died. Even before this there had been Christians in Britain, and during the last persecution of the Christian Church by the Emperor Diocletian (284-305), several British martyrs gave up their lives for the faith. The most famous of these was Alban, slain at Verulamium, where in after years a church was erected in his honour that gave the Roman city its modern name of St. Albans. During the fourth century we know that there were bishops at Londinium, Lindum, and Eburacum, many churches and monasteries, and an active and vigorous ecclesiastical life. The British Church became strong enough to send out missionaries to other lands, of whom the most famous were St. Patrick, who completed the conversion of the Irish to the faith, and St. Ninian, who first taught the Caledonians, or Picts, the Christian religion. Britain even had a heretic of its own in Pelagius, who denied the doctrine of original sin, and made himself very famous all over the Roman world as the foe of St. Augustine, the great African father. From the British Church is directly descended the Welsh Church, and less directly the Churches of Ireland and Scotland. By its means civilization was extended into regions which, though inaccessible to the Roman arms, were brought by Roman missionaries into the Christian fold.

12. Gradually the Roman Empire decayed, and Britain suffered much from its growing weakness. Towards the end of the third century the legions garrisoning distant provinces grew out of hand, and, without regard for the central power in Italy, made and unmade emperors of their own. Thus in 287, Carausius, a Roman admiral, allied himself with bands of pirates, received the support of the soldiers, seized the government of Britain, and strove to make himself master of the whole Roman world. He conquered part of northern Gaul, but in 293 was slain by his own chief minister, Allectus, who ruled over Britain until he was slain in 296. It was to put down such disorders that Diocletian carried out his reforms in the administration, and Constantine, succeeding after a time to Diocletian's power, continued his general policy, though he took up a different line as regards religion. The reforms of Diocletian and the recognition of Christianity by Constantine kept the Roman Empire together for a century longer.

Decay of
the Roman
power in
Britain.

Carausius,
287-293,
and
Allectus,
293-296.



13. Fresh troubles soon arose, which fell with special force on a remote province like Britain. Despite the frontier wall, bands of fierce Caledonians, by this time more often called *Picts*, raided at their will the northern parts of the province. Swarms of Irishmen, then generally called *Scots*, similarly plundered the western coasts and effected large settlements in regions so wide apart as Cornwall, Wales, and Galloway. An even worse danger came from the east, where swarms of pirates and adventurers from North Germany, called *Saxons* by Romans and Britons, devastated the coasts of the North Sea and Channel. To ward off these invaders the Romans set up a new military organization. A new military officer was appointed, called *Count of the Saxon Shore* (*Comes litoris Saxonici*), whose special duty it was to protect the region specially liable to these invasions. A series of forts, stretching from the Wash to Sussex, formed the centres of the Roman defence against the pirates; and the majestic ruins of Rutupiae (Richborough) in Kent, Anderida (Pevensey) in Sussex, and Gariannonum (Burgh Castle) in Suffolk, show the solid strength of these last efforts to uphold the Roman power. At the same time the northern defence was reorganized, and the troops garrisoning the wall of Hadrian were put under another high military officer, called the *Duke of the Britains* (*Dux Britanniarum*), while the legionary army in its camps was commanded by the *Count of the Britains* (*Comes Britanniarum*). All these military changes date from the reign of Diocletian, and were parts of his great scheme for reinvigorating the empire.

14. Early in the fifth century the Roman Empire upon the continent was overrun by fierce German tribes, anxious to find new homes for themselves. The settlement of the Franks in northern Gaul cut off Britain from the heart of the empire, and Rome and Italy itself were threatened. With the Germans at the gates of Rome, it became impossible for the emperors to find the men and money necessary for keeping up their authority in a distant land like Britain. After 410, the year which saw the sack of Rome by Alaric the Goth, the Romans ceased to send officials and troops to Britain. Henceforth the Britons were left to look after themselves, and their entreaties to the emperors to help them in their distress were necessarily disregarded.

15. Roman rule had, however, lasted so long in Britain that the upper classes at least considered themselves Romans, and strove to carry on the government after the Roman fashion. To

Barbarian
invasions,
and the
efforts to
ward
them off.

The with-
drawal of
the Roman
legions,
410.

them it did not seem that Britain had ceased to be Roman: but rather that they as Romans had to carry on Roman rule themselves, without the help of the emperor or the other districts of the empire. It was soon found, however, that the Britons were not romanized enough to be able to maintain the Roman system. (The leaders did not work together, and gradually the old Celtic tribal spirit revived in a fashion that made united action and organized government very difficult.)

The Britons left to their own resources, 410-449.

16. Before long southern Britain began to split up into little tribal states, and this break up of unity made it possible for the barbarians, who had been withstood with difficulty all through the previous century, to carry everything before them. The Picts crossed the Roman wall, and plundered and raided as they would. The Scots from Ireland established themselves along the west coast, and besides other settlements, effected so large a conquest of the western Highlands and islands outside the northern limits of the old provinces that a new Scotland grew up on British soil. Even more dangerous were the incursions of the Saxon invaders in the east. These were no longer simply plunderers, but, like the Franks and Goths on the continent, wished to establish new homes for themselves in Britain. Before their constant incursions the Britons were gradually forced to give way. Within forty years of the withdrawal of the last Roman governors, the process of German conquest had begun.

The Picts, Scots, and Saxons.

17. The barbarian conquest went on gradually for about a century and a half, and by the end of it nearly every trace of Roman influence was removed. Vestiges of Roman towns, villas, churches, and public buildings; the still abiding lines of the network of Roman roads; the continuance of the Christian faith among the free Britons; a few Roman words still surviving in the language of the Celtic-speaking Britons, and a few place-names (such as *street* from *strata*) among their Teutonic supplanters, were almost all that there was to prove the abiding traces of the great conquering people which had first brought our island into relation with the main stream of ancient civilization.

Permanent results of Roman rule in Britain.

CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH CONQUEST OF SOUTHERN BRITAIN (449-607)

Chief Dates :

- 449. Jutes established in Kent.
- 516. Battle of Mount Badon.
- 577. Battle of Deorham.
- 607. Battle of Chester.

1. THE Teutonic invaders, who began to set up new homes for themselves in Britain after the middle of the fifth century, came from northern Germany. Their original homes were along the coasts of the North Sea, the lower courses of the Elbe and Weser, and the isthmus that connects the Danish peninsula with Germany. Though all were very similar in their language and manners, they were divided into three different tribes—the *Jutes*, the *Saxons*, and the *Angles*.

The Teutonic conquest of Southern Britain.

The Jutes. Of these the Jutes were the least important, though they were the first to settle in our island. They are generally said to have come from Jutland, the Danish peninsula, which used to be explained as meaning the land of the Jutes. But there are difficulties in the way of accepting this view, and some people now believe that the Jutes came from the lower Weser, to the west of the other colonizers of Britain.

The Saxons. The Saxons came from the lower Elbe, and were so numerous a group of tribes that before long nearly all the peoples of North Germany were called Saxons. The Angles lived to the north of the Saxons, in the region now called Holstein. So many of them crossed over to Britain that their name soon disappeared from Germany altogether.

And the Angles.

2. Each of the invading tribes included many small states, ruled by petty kings or by elected magistrates, called *aldermen*. The newcomers had no common name and no common interests. Each little group lived in a village apart from their neighbours, and all of them were very warlike, fierce, and energetic. They had dwelt farther

away from the Romans than the other barbarian invaders of the empire, and were therefore much less influenced by Roman civilization than nations like the Franks and the Goths. For that reason they remained heathens, worshipping Woden, Thor, and the other battle-loving gods of the old Germans. They had little of the respect for the Roman Empire which made the Teutonic conquerors of Gaul and Italy eager to be recognized by the emperors, and quick to learn many of the Roman ways. It resulted from this that they made a much cleaner sweep of Roman institutions than did their brethren on the continent, and that the more since the Britons fought against them more vigorously and for a longer time than the Romans of Gaul or Italy against their invaders. Yet their conquest of Britain is but a part of that general movement called the *Invasion of the Barbarians*, or the *Wandering of the Nations*, which everywhere broke down the Roman power in western Europe. In fact, this was done more completely in Britain than anywhere else.

3. The invaders of Britain had no common name for themselves. Since the fourth century the Romans and Britons had called them all *Saxons*, and to this day the Celtic peoples of the land, the Welsh, the Irish, and the Highland Scots, still continue the Roman custom in their own tongues. But when the invaders had settled in Britain, and had begun to find the need of a common word to describe them all, they used the word *Angle* as a general name. *Angle* is only another form of *English*, and as this has remained ever since the name of all the new settlers and their descendants, it is perhaps better for us to call them English from the first. They are, however, sometimes styled the *Anglo-Saxons*—that is, the people formed by the union of the Angles and Saxons. For convenience' sake we shall use the word "English" in this broader sense, and keep the term "Angle" for the tribes who shared with the Jutes and Saxons in the conquest of Britain. The parts of Britain in which the newcomers, whether Angle, Jute, or Saxon, settled, were henceforth *England*—that is, land of the English—and they were the forefathers of most modern Englishmen. As time went on, however, many people of British descent began to speak the English tongue and regard themselves as English; and nowadays a great many Englishmen are in no wise descended from the old English.

4. We know very little of the fashion in which the English tribes came to Britain. There are famous legends of some aspects of the conquest, but it is impossible to say whether they are true

or not, as they are first told many hundred years after the event. There is a well-known story of the first settlement of the newcomers in Britain. Vortigern, one of the British kings, we are told, followed the fashion of the Romans of the continent, who called in German warriors to help them to fight against their enemies. Attracted by the high pay that he offered, a tribe of

The Jutes Jutes, headed by their dukes, the brothers Hengist in Kent, 449, and Horsa, came to the aid of Vortigern against and the Isle of Wight. Picts and Scots. But when they had done their work,

instead of going home, they resolved to settle in the land of the Britons. In 449 they chased away the Britons, and established themselves in *Kent*, which thus became the first English settlement in Britain. Before long Kent became a kingdom, and Hengist and Horsa were its first kings. Some years later another Jutish settlement was effected in the *Isle of Wight* and on the south coast of what is now called Hampshire. These were the only Jutish conquests, and the very name of Jute was soon forgotten. Though Kent long remained a separate kingdom, the Jutes of Wight became absorbed in the larger population of Saxon settlers who established themselves all around them.

5. The Saxons conquered and settled southern and south-eastern Britain. The first Saxon settlement was made in 477, when a chief-

The Saxon settlements. tain named Ælle set up the kingdom of *Sussex*—that is, South Saxony—in the district that is represented

by the later county of the name. A very famous incident of Ælle's conquest was the storming of the old Roman fortress of Anderida (Pevensey), one of the strongholds set up in the fourth century to protect the south coast from the

Saxon pirates. At last it was to succumb to the fierce

Sussex, 477. assaults of their descendants. Before long, Ælle and his men had set up new homes for themselves in the land of their choice. The great and pathless oak forest of the Weald cut them off from the Jutes, who settled to the east and west, and from other Saxon tribes that later sailed up the Thames and established the little kingdom of *Surrey* to their north. A more

Surrey. important conquest began in 495, when the Saxon chiefs, Cerdic and his son Cynric, landed at the head of Southampton water and began the kingdom of *Wessex*, or West Saxony. This

Wessex, 495. was originally confined to part of what is now Hampshire, but it gradually extended its limits, absorbing

the Jutish kingdom of Wight and the Saxon kingdom of Surrey, and gaining still greater advantages at the expense of

the Britons of the upper Thames and lower Severn valleys and of the regions of downs and hills that stretches from Hampshire westwards. Thus, unlike Kent and Sussex, which remained in their original limits, the history of Wessex is from the beginning a history of constant expansion.

6. Other Saxon kingdoms were established on the eastern coast of England. The East Saxons set up the kingdom of *Essex*, and the Middle Saxons that of *Middlesex*, a petty state that owed its sole importance to containing within its limits the great trading city of London, whose commercial prosperity was checked rather than destroyed by the wave of barbarian conquest. Ultimately, however, *Middlesex* became absorbed in *Essex*, just as its southern neighbour, *Surrey*, was swallowed up in *Wessex*. Here the Saxon invasion was stayed.

7. The conquest of the east, the midlands, and the north was the work of the Angles. To the north of *Essex*, Anglian swarms peopled the lands between the great fens of the Ouse valley and the coast of the North Sea. This region became the kingdom of *East Anglia*, or East England, and was divided geographically into a northern and southern portion, whose names are preserved in the modern counties of Norfolk—that is, land of the North folk—and Suffolk, the land of the South folk. Other Anglian bands made their way up the Trent valley, and gradually set up a series of small states in Middle England, extending southwards from the Humber to the northern boundaries of the Saxon settlements in the Thames valley. The history of these districts is very obscure, and is not preserved, as in the Saxon lands further south, by the names and limits of the modern shires. Of the many Anglian kingdoms of the midlands one only survived, and ultimately absorbed all the others. This was the little kingdom of *Mercia*—that is, the March or boundary land—set up in the upper Trent valley, and stretching over the rough hill-land of Cannock chase towards the middle Severn valley, where the Britons long held their own. North of the Humber two well-defined Anglian kingdoms grew up. These were *Deira*, or the southern kingdom, which roughly corresponds to the modern Yorkshire, and the more northerly state of *Bernicia*, which stretched along the east coast from the Tees to the Firth of Forth, which was founded, it is said, by Ida in 547. Both these kingdoms had as their western boundary the wild uplands of the Pennine chain and its northern

Essex and Middlesex.

The Anglian settlements.

East Anglia.

Mercia and the midland kingdoms.

Northumbria, 547.

continuation, the Ettrick Forest. This tangle of hills and moors was difficult for the invaders to traverse, and long protected the freedom of the Britons of the west coast between the Clyde and the Dee.

8. It took nearly a hundred and fifty years before the English settlements were completely established. The Britons, who fought

Character-istics of the English conquest. very stubbornly to protect their liberties, remembered so much of the Roman discipline and organization that they remained formidable foes to a series of disorderly tribes, each consisting of a small number of warriors

fighting for their own hands. The English brought over with them their wives and families, and aimed not simply at conquering their enemies, but sought to establish new homes for themselves. They brought with them their Teutonic speech, the parent of our English tongue. They preserved the manners, institutions, and religion which they had followed in their original homes in northern Germany.

9. The best and bravest of the Britons withdrew before the English and joined their brethren, who still remained masters

The fate of the Britons. in the hills of the west. Such as remained in the east and south, as slaves and dependants of the conquerors, gradually lost their ancient tongue and

institutions, and became one with the invaders. It shows how thorough the conquest was that the Christian religion, professed by all the Britons, was entirely rooted out in all the districts where the English established themselves. Luckily for the English, the Britons seldom acted together for any long time. The wiser Britons held fast to the Roman tradition of unity, and set up war-leaders who might take the place of the sometime Roman governors. The most famous of these was the great Celtic hero, King Arthur,

whose mighty victories stayed for a time the advance

Arthur and Mount Badon, 516. of the English, and perhaps saved the Britons of the west from the fate of their brethren of the east. The

best known of Arthur's battles was fought at a place called *Mons Badonicus* or Mount Badon, in about 516. Its situation is quite uncertain, but it is most probably to be found somewhere in the south-west, possibly at Badbury in Dorsetshire. It seems that Arthur's triumph was over the West Saxons, whose advance was stayed for nearly sixty years. But the Britons only united when compelled to do so to meet the English attacks. They split up into little tribal states, and, if the English had not themselves also been disunited, the invaders could have probably driven their foes into the sea. As it was, many of the more strenuous Britons scorned to live any longer in the land which

they shared with their Saxon enemies. There was so large an emigration of Britons to the Gaulish peninsula of Armorica, that that land obtained the new name of *Brittany* or *The emigration to Brittany.* Britain, and to this day a large part of the inhabitants of this little Britain beyond the sea continue to speak a Celtic tongue, very similar to the Welsh or Cornish, which their forefathers took with them to Gaul when they fled from the Saxon conquerors. Their withdrawal made easier the work of the English, and it speaks well for the toughness of the British resistance that so much of the island remained in their hands.

10. For about a century fresh swarms of English came to Britain from beyond sea. After that the migration ceased, but the stronger of the English kingdoms continued to advance westwards at the expense of the Britons. *The Britons become the Welsh.* The English did not call the Britons by that name, but described them as the *Welsh*—that is, as the foreigners, or the speakers of a strange tongue. Gradually the Britons, who in the sixth century were still proud to call themselves Romans, took the name of the *Cymry*, or the Comrades, by which the Welsh are still known in their own language. A Welsh monk named Gildas, who lived in the sixth century, has written a gloomy picture of the state of Britain during the period of the English conquest. The heathen English were cruel and bloodthirsty; but the Welsh were quarrelsome and divided, and Gildas regarded their defeat as the just punishment of their sins.

11. The warfare between Welsh and English still went on, and at last the Welsh received a rude shock from two English victories, which cut the British territories into three parts, and destroyed any hopes of future Celtic unity. *The end of the period of English settlement.* The West Saxons gradually made their way westward from their original settlement in Hampshire, and in 577 Ceawlin, the West Saxon king, won a great battle over the Welsh at Deorham (Dyrham), in Gloucestershire, which led to their conquest of the lower Severn valley. Thirty years after this (607) the Bernician king, Æthelfrith, won a corresponding victory at Chester, which pushed forward the northern Anglian settlements to the Irish Channel, and transferred the lands between Ribble and Mersey from British to English hands. Up to these days the Welsh had ruled over the whole west from the Clyde to the English Channel. Henceforth they were cut up into three groups. Of these the northernmost was called *Cumbria* or *Cumberland*—that is, land of the *Cymry* or Welsh. This stretched from the

Clyde, the northern limit of the Britons, to the Ribble, and was separated from Bernicia and Deira by the Pennine chain. The

Cumbria. modern county of Cumberland still preserves for a part of this area its ancient name. Enclosed within this region was a colony of Goidelic Picts, in the extreme south-west of the modern Scotland, which derived from its Goidelic inhabitants its name of *Galloway*.

12. The central and chief British group of peoples is represented by the modern Wales, and by a large stretch of land to the eastward, including the valley of the middle Severn, which has since become English by a slow process of conquest North Wales. and absorption. Split up among several rival kings,

this district lost, through its want of unity, some of the importance which it gained by its size and by the inaccessibility of its mountains. In early days the whole region was described as North Wales—that is, Wales north of the Bristol And West Wales. Channel. This was to distinguish it from *West Wales*, the country still held by the Britons in the south-

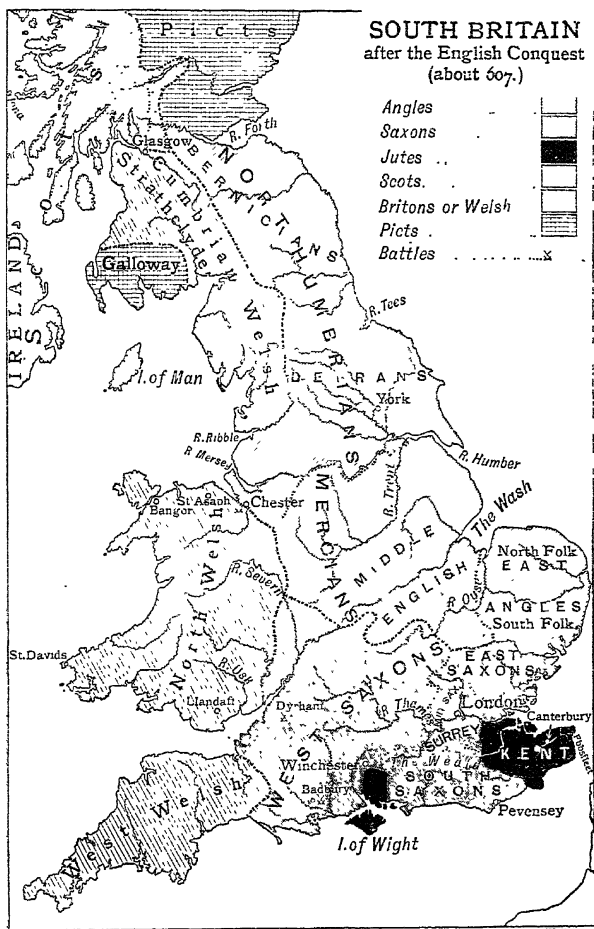
west peninsula. Separated from North Wales by the West Saxon victory of Deorham, West Wales still included the whole of Cornwall and Devonshire, and a good deal of Somerset. Both in North and West Wales there were occasional colonies of Goidelic-speaking Scots or Irish, who have left memorials of this tongue in the Irish inscriptions, written in a character called *Ogham*, found in many parts of Wales and Cornwall.

13. Thus was the old Roman diocese of Britain unequally divided between the English and the Welsh. The great part of the district north of the Forth and Clyde was in the hands of the *Picts*—a race doubtless identical with the ancient Caledonians, and apparently

The Picts. made up of Goidelic tribes with a large Iberian intermixture. But in the north-western parts of the modern Scotland the Picts had been driven out by immigrant Scots from Ireland, who had set up an independent kingdom of

And Scots. the Scots in the western Highlands and islands, running inland as far as the chain of hills called *Drum-alban*, which forms the watershed of the eastern and western seas. From these the north-west of Britain first got the name of *Scotland*, or land of the Scots; but at first this term was only given to a very small fragment of the modern

Columba, 597. Scotland. Soon, however, the Scots began to influence the Picts. Up to the sixth century the Picts, alone of the Celts, still remained heathen; but Columba, the greatest of



the Irish saints, settled down in a monastery in the little island of Iona, among the British Scots, and devoted the rest of his life, until his death in 597, to the conversion of the Picts. Two and a half centuries after the Picts had learnt their faith from the Scots, they obtained a Scot for their king. In 844 Kenneth Mac Alpine (that is, son of Alpine), King of the Scots, succeeded through his mother to the Pictish kingdom beyond Drumalban. His successor continued to rule Pictland as well as Scotland, and as they were Scots by race, and the difference between the two peoples was not very great, Picts and Scots were gradually fused into one people. The result was that the whole of the population north of Forth and Clyde acquired the name of Scots, and their country was called Scotland. For many centuries, however, the Irish continued to be called Scots, until at last confusion was avoided by the term becoming gradually restricted to their brethren in northern Britain.

14. By the end of the sixth century the British islands were settling down into something like their modern divisions.

There was an *England*, much smaller than modern England, though extending further northwards to the Firth of Forth, and gradually making its way westward at the expense of the Welsh. There was a *Wales*, much bigger than the modern Wales, but cut into three portions by the fights at Chester and Deorham, with the result that the largest of the three, represented by the modern Wales, became in a special sense the representative of the ancient Britons. There was a new *Scotland*, comprising the lands beyond Forth and Clyde, and Ireland, though still a land of Scots, became quite separated from it.

15. In all these districts, Anglian and Saxon, British and Goidelic, the land was split up into many small states, constantly at war with each other, and filling the country with ceaseless confusion. While the Celtic states, owing to the strength of the tribal system, seldom showed any tendency to be drawn together, the English tribes, on the contrary, began almost from the beginning to unite with each other, and so bring about the beginnings of greater unity. The Celts were Christians, and infinitely more civilized and cultivated than their enemies; but they lacked the political capacity and persistent energy which made the English stronger in building up a state. The result was that supremacy fell more and more into English hands. While the struggles of Celtic chieftains resulted

Beginnings
of England,
Wales, Scot-
land, and
Ireland.

Why Eng-
land be-
came the
strongest.

in nothing at all save bloodshed and confusion, the equally cruel fighting between the English tribes led to the absorption of the weaker into the stronger kingdoms, and so prepared the way for the growth of English unity. This tendency became the more active when the conversion of the English to Christianity gave them a common faith and a common Church organization. In the next chapter we shall see how the early steps towards English unity were made, and how the English became Christians.

CHAPTER IV

THE EARLY OVERLORDSHIPS AND THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH TO CHRISTIANITY (597-821).

Chief Dates :

- 597. Death of St. Columba and landing of St. Augustine.
- 627. Conversion of Edwin.
- 664. Synod of Whitby.
- 688. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 685. Death of Egfrith.
- 757. Death of Ethelbald of Mercia.
- 796. Death of Offa.
- 821. Death of Cenulf.

1. We have seen how numerous were the kingdoms set up by the English who conquered southern Britain. The settlement was,

however, hardly completed when a strong tendency towards amalgamation set in among them. In all cases the union of kingdoms was due to conquest by a stronger and more vigorous king. It was rarely, however, that such a monarch was able to effect a complete subjection of his weaker neighbours. In most instances he was content with forcing his defeated enemy to acknowledge his superiority, and perhaps to pay him tribute. Thus more frequent than downright conquests of one kingdom by another was the establishment of such *overlordships* on the part of a more vigorous state over feeble kingdoms. Of brief duration and indefinite meaning, these overlordships were of importance in preparing the way to more complete conquest. By these processes the original kingdoms of the settlers were by the early part of the seventh century reduced to seven in number. These were the states long known as the *Heptarchy*, a word intended to mean a land divided into seven kingdoms. In reality, however, the "Heptarchic" states represent not the first but the second stage of the

The first steps towards English Unity.

The early Overlordships of one state over another.

The so-called Heptarchy.

history of the English in Britain. They were Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex, and among them the first three were very much stronger than the last four.

2. Northumbria, or Northumberland—that is, the land north of the Humber—was formed when a king of Bernicia conquered his southern neighbours in Deira, and drove their king into exile. His son and successor, Æthelfrith ^{The stronger states.} (593–617), gained a great victory over the Welsh ^{Northumbria under Æthelfrith,} at Chester, and added the lands between Ribble and ^{593–617.} Dee to his kingdom. But he had so much to do fighting the Welsh and Scots that he had little leisure to concern himself with the affairs of his southern neighbours.

3. In the south, Ceawlin, king of the West Saxons (560–593), played rather earlier a similar part to that of Æthelfrith in the north. Wessex had long been extending itself beyond its original scanty limits. It absorbed the ^{Wessex under} Jutish kingdom of Wight and the Saxon kingdom of ^{Ceawlin,} Surrey; but its main advance was at the expense of ^{560–593.} the Welsh. By this time the districts now comprised in Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Dorsetshire had been added to Cerdic's original kingdom. Moreover, for a time, Wessex crossed the middle and upper Thames, and extended into midland districts that finally became Mercian. The victory of Deorham made Gloucestershire and part of Somerset included within Wessex, so that Ceawlin is as much the creator of the later Wessex as Æthelfrith is of Northumbria.

4. More than a generation after this, a similar process in the midlands created a third great English state in Mercia. Up to the days of its king, Penda (626–655), Mercia was only ^{Mercia under} a little Anglian kingdom in the upper Trent valley. ^{Penda,} By a series of successful wars, Penda destroyed the ^{626–655.} power of nearly all the other Anglian monarchs in middle England. Moreover, he wrested from the West Saxons some of their conquests from the Welsh in the lower Severn valley, and took from the Northumbrians a good deal of what Æthelfrith had won at Chester. The result of his work was to create a greater Mercia that included the whole of middle England. So completely was this conquest effected that the very names and boundaries of the kingdoms conquered by Penda became almost forgotten.

5. Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex became the three great English states; but the little kingdoms of the south-east, East

Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex. were so well established and so clearly marked out by natural boundaries that they long continued to maintain their individuality. Downright conquest was here extremely difficult, but the abler kings succeeded in turn in setting up an overlordship over their neighbours. Sussex and Essex were too weak to accomplish anything, but one vigorous king gave to Kent, and another procured for East Anglia, a brief period of supremacy. Profiting by the confusion that fell over Wessex after Ceawlin's death, Ethelbert, king of the Kentishmen, defeated his West Saxon neighbours and ruled as overlord over the kingdoms of the south-east. His power is shown by the fact that he was the first English king who had any dealings with the continent. choosing as his wife, Bertha, the daughter of one of the Frankish kings ruling over Gaul. On Ethelbert's death in 616, his power passed to Redwald, the king of the East Anglians. To Ceawlin, Ethelbert, and Redwald the name of *Bretwalda*, or *ruler of the Britons*, has sometimes been given by later writers. It has, of course, no appropriateness except in the case of the conqueror of the Britons at Deorham, but it shows the impression left by their power.

6. Though planted for a century and a half in a land once Christian, the English still remained heathens at the end of the sixth century. They scorned to accept the religion of the conquered Britons, and the Welsh had no wish to share with their hated supplanters the benefits of their faith. Yet the Welsh were ardent Christians, and the Welsh Church attained the height of its power and influence by this period. It was the great age of the Welsh saints, such as David, the founder of the bishopric of St. David's; Daniel, first bishop of Bangor; Dyvrig, bishop of Llandaff, and Kentigern, first bishop of Glasgow, then a British town, and afterwards the founder of the see called from his disciple and successor, St. Asaph. Even more flourishing was the state of the Church in Ireland, where Columba, the missionary of the Picts and the founder of the abbey of Iona, was the greatest of a long catalogue of Irish saints. Celtic Britain was, however, so far cut off from the continent that it developed during these years a type of Christianity of its own, differing in some respects from the Church of the western world, which was attaining increased unity and vigour under the supremacy of the popes or bishops of Rome. The Celtic Church took little heed of what the Roman Church was doing. It celebrated

the Easter feast according to a different calculation from that which was accepted on the continent. It was so much influenced by the monastic movement that the bishops of the Church, especially in Ireland, became in practice subordinate to the abbots, who, though simple priests, ruled over the great houses of religion that Celtic piety had established. Thus Columba, priest and abbot only, governed all the churches of the Scots of the Highlands and also over his converts the Picts. His death in 597 is doubly memorable because in that same year the first effort was made to preach Christianity to the English.

7. Bertha, the wife of Ethelbert of Kent, was, like all the Franks, a Christian. and a Christian-bishop went over with her to Kent as her chaplain. For his wife's use Ethelbert set apart a church, deserted since the English conquest, which still remained erect in the old Roman city of Durovernum, from which Ethelbert ruled over the Kentishmen, and which the English now called Canterbury—that is, the borough of the Kentishmen. But though tolerant to his wife's faith, he showed no disposition to embrace it.

Bertha and
Ethelbert.

8. The power of Rome still counted for much, and the Roman Empire, after it had ceased to rule the West, still went on in the East, though the emperors had abandoned Italy, and now lived at Constantinople. Their withdrawal made the pope the greatest man in Rome, and by this time the influence of Rome in the West meant that of the Roman bishop even more than that of the emperor. It happened that one of the greatest of all the popes was ruling the Church while Ethelbert was king of Kent. This was Gregory I., or the Great, whose high character, strong will, and profound earnestness did much to extend permanently the influence of the Roman see over Christendom. Gregory still looked upon Britain as part of the Roman Empire, and was pained that a once Christian province had fallen largely into the hands of heathen barbarians. Accordingly he set Augustine, abbot of a Roman monastery which Gregory himself had founded, at the head of a band of monks, and instructed them to make their way to Britain and preach the gospel to the English heathens. In 597 Augustine and his companions landed in Kent, at Ebbsfleet in Thanet, where it was believed that Hengist and Horsa had landed a century and a half earlier. Ethelbert welcomed the missionaries, and allowed them to preach freely to all who chose to listen to them. Meanwhile the monks lived at Canterbury, hard by the king's court, and before long the

Gregory the
Great and
Augustine.

example of their pious and unselfish lives induced Ethelbert and most of his subjects to receive baptism. After the king's conversion Augustine crossed over to Gaul, whence he soon came back to England as archbishop of the English Church. He built his cathedral at Canterbury, which, as the capital of the first Christian king among the English, remained ever after the chief bishopric of the English Church. Before long another bishopric was set up at Rochester, which, as its name shows, was also an old Roman city, and before long the new faith spread beyond Kent to the dependent kingdom of Essex, over which Ethelbert's influence was strong. The East Saxon bishopric was set up at London, the commercial capital of the land since Roman times.

9. Before long the East Angles began to turn Christians also, but their king, Redwald, though professing the Christian faith, also continued to worship idols. Redwald was a strong ruler, and after Ethelbert's death the overlordship of south-eastern Britain passed over to him. He gave shelter to Edwin, son of the king of Deira, whom Æthelfrith of Bernicia drove out of his home when he united the northern kingdoms with Northumbria.

Æthelfrith went to war against Redwald when he refused to yield up the fugitive, but at a battle on the Idle, near Retford, Æthelfrith was slain. Thereupon, with Redwald's help, Edwin made himself king over all Northumbria. He married the daughter of Ethelbert of Kent, whose name was Ethelburga. Being a Christian this lady took with her to her husband's court at York a Christian monk, called Paulinus, as her chaplain. Before long the influence of his wife and Paulinus prevailed over Edwin, and in 627 the Northumbrian king received baptism from Paulinus, who was soon consecrated archbishop of York. In a short time most of

Deira was won over to the new faith. This triumph was the more important since the newly converted ruler soon proved a mighty warrior. When Redwald died, Edwin became the strongest of the kings of the English. Under him a more real overlordship over the lesser kingdoms was set up than that which had prevailed under any earlier monarchs. To him and his two successors the title of *Bretwalda* was also sometimes given.

10. Augustine was already dead, but Paulinus was one of his followers, and his conversion of the Deirans was the greatest result of the mission which his master had led from Rome to England.

To have done so much in so short a time might well seem to be a great success; but Pope Gregory had formed even more ambitious schemes for Augustine than the good monk was able to carry out. Gregory expected Augustine to convert all the English, to make friends with the British Christians, and to set up two archbishops and twenty-four bishops, under whom the whole Church of Britain was to be governed. But Augustine had only taught Christianity to the little kingdoms of the south-east, and, though he met some of the Welsh bishops at a conference, he had been unable to establish friendly relations with them. They rejected his claims to be their superior, and Augustine, denouncing them as schismatics who stood outside the true Church, prophesied terrible disasters if they would not join with him in converting the English. The victory of the heathen Æthelfrith over the Welsh a few years later at Chester seemed to the Christians of Kent only a fulfilment of Augustine's prophecy. Under these circumstances there was no chance of carrying out Gregory's scheme for bringing all the Churches of Britain into one fold.

Limits to the success of the Augustinian mission.

11. Even in Kent and Essex many fell away from the faith after Augustine's death. The English converts found that the Christian missionaries wished them to give up many of their old customs, and held up to their admiration humble and weak saints whom they despised as useless for fighting. A great heathen reaction arose, and the old king of the Mercians, Penda, whose victories had made him master of central England, made himself the champion of the grim gods of pagan Germany. The power of the Christian king, Edwin, had grown so great that all his neighbours were afraid of him, and Penda hated Edwin both as a Christian and as the enemy of Mercia. Edwin had also won victories over the Welsh, and harried the Welsh king, Cadwallon, so much that he forgot his Christian faith, and made a league with the heathen Penda against the Northumbrians. It was the first time that Englishmen and Welshmen had fought on the same side, after nearly two centuries of bitter hostility. The combination was irresistible. In 633 Penda and Cadwallon defeated and slew Edwin at the battle of Heathfield, in southern Yorkshire.

Penda and the heathen reaction.

Battle of Heathfield, 633.

12. For a year Welsh and Mercians cruelly devastated Northumbria. Christianity was almost blotted out, and Paulinus fled to Kent, where he died bishop of the little see of Rochester. In 635, however, a saviour arose

Oswald of Northumbria.

for the north in Oswald, the son of the mighty Æthelfrith, who, on Edwin's accession, had been driven into exile among the Scots of Britain. In a battle at Heavenfield, near the Roman wall, Oswald overthrew the British king, and henceforth reigned as king over the Northumbrians. Cadwallon was the last British king who was able to seriously check the course of the English conquest. After his death the Welsh of Cumbria were forced to accept Oswald as their lord. Thus, though Penda was still unsubdued, the son of Æthelfrith succeeded to most of the power of his rival Edwin.

13. Oswald was as good a Christian as Edwin, and, after his accession, the new faith was once more preached in Northumbria.

Aidan and the Scottish mission. But Oswald had learnt his religion after a different fashion from that in which his predecessor had been taught. He had been instructed in the faith at

Iona, the great Scottish island monastery where the successor of Columba still ruled over the Churches of the north; and when he became king, Scottish monks from Iona came at his bidding into Northumbria, and took up the work laid down by the Roman missionaries. Their chief, Aidan, became bishop of the Northumbrians, and set up his cathedral in the little island of Lindisfarne, off the coast of Bernicia. Before long his zeal and piety had won most of Bernicia to the Christian faith.

14. The work of Oswald and Aidan was soon cut short. In 642 there was a fresh war with the Mercians, and Penda slew Oswald

Penda and Oswiu. at the battle of Maserfield, near Oswestry. Again there was a period of terrible confusion in Northumbria,

but again a strong king was found in Oswald's brother Oswiu, who in 655 defeated and killed Penda at Winwood. On the Mercian's death the Northumbrian overlordship, which had gone on fitfully despite the victories of the heathen king, was established on a more solid basis than ever. It lasted for the rest of Oswiu's reign, and also for that of his son and successor, Ecgfrith. During this period the conversion of the English was completed, and the Church established on a firm and solid footing.

15. Even during Penda's lifetime the Christian missionaries had no need to despair. Though no saint like Oswald, Oswiu was

The final conversion of Northumbria. a good friend of the Christians, and even in Mercia the new religion had made such progress that in his old age Penda had been compelled to tolerate it.

Penda's son and successor was a Christian, and welcomed the Scottish and Northumbrian missionaries that Oswiu sent to his people. The most famous of these was Ceadda, or

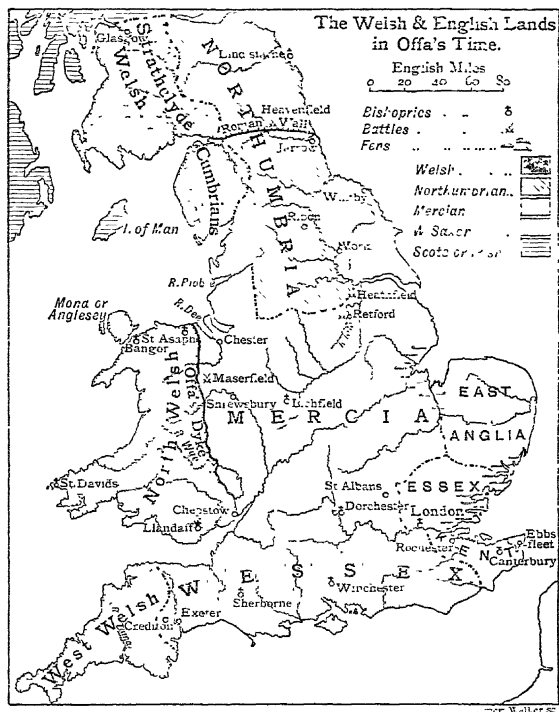
of this period she was ruled by two great kings, each of whom
 Under reigned for an exceptionally long period. The first of
 Ethelbald, these, Ethelbald (716-757), became so powerful that
 716-757. he was not content to be called king of the Mercians,
 but styled himself "king of all the South English." Under his



Sketch Map showing position of Nectansmere.

successor, Offa the Mighty (757-796), the Mercian supremacy
 attained its culminating point. Offa drove the
 And Offa, Northumbrians out of the lands that now form
 757-796. southern Lancashire, and incorporated them with his
 kingdom. He conquered from the West Saxons all their territories
 north of the Thames, which henceforward remained the boundary
 of the two states. He made Shrewsbury an English town, driving
 the Welsh from the middle Severn valley, and digging, it is said,
 a deep ditch and mound, called *Offa's Dyke*, between the mouth of
 the Dee and the mouth of the Wye, to separate Mercia and Wales.
 He slew the king of the East Angles, and annexed Kent. He
 appointed two sons-in-law as dependent kings over Wessex and
 Northumbria. In every way he exercised more authority over the
 rest of England than any king before his days. He was one
 of the few Old English kings powerful enough to have much

influence beyond sea. The great Frankish king, Charles the Great, was his friend, and often corresponded with him. Though a fierce warrior, like all the great Mercians, Offa was a good friend of the Church, and built the abbey of St. Alban's in honour of



the first British martyr. Offa thought it unworthy of the greatness of Mercia that it should be subject to an archbishop who lived outside Mercia. He therefore persuaded the pope to make Lichfield, the chief Mercian see, an archbishopric. If this plan had succeeded, each of the three chief states of England would have

had an archbishop of its own, for Northumbria had its primate at York, and Canterbury, cut off from ruling the Midlands, would soon have become the archbishopric of the West Saxons only. The result of this would have been to destroy the unity of the English Church as established by Theodore. Luckily Offa's plan did not last long, for only one archbishop ever sat at Lichfield.

22. Offa's successor, Cenulf (796-821), was less powerful than he, and was so much afraid of the persistent hostility of Canterbury that he gave up the plan of making Lichfield an archbishopric. When Cenulf died, Mercia fell into anarchy, and the fall just as Northumbria had done after the death of of Mercia. Egfrith. Supremacy depended mainly on the character of the king, and no kingdom had the good luck to have an uninterrupted succession of kings strong enough to rule their neighbours. But each fresh overlordship was a fresh step towards the unity of England, and Offa had done much towards it by breaking down the power of the lesser kingdoms. The smaller "heptarchic" states had by this time ceased to have any real independence. Only the three great states counted any longer. Of these Northumbria and Mercia had exhausted themselves, so that soon after Cenulf's death supremacy once more passed southwards, when the supremacy of Wessex succeeded upon that of the midland and the northern kingdoms.

CHAPTER V

THE WEST SAXON OVERLORDSHIP AND THE DANISH INVASIONS (802-899)

Chief Dates:

- 802. Accession of Egbert.
- 825. Battle of Ellendune.
- 858. Death of Ethelwulf.
- 871. Alfred's year of battles.
- 878. Treaty of Chippenham.
- 886. Alfred and Guthrum's Peace.
- 899. Death of Alfred.
- 911. Normandy established.

1. DURING the Northumbrian overlordship Wessex was steadily making its way westwards at the expense of the West Welsh, and eastwards at the cost of the little Saxon and Jutish kingdoms of the south-east. Its progress was stayed for a time when its neighbour, Mercia, replaced Northumbria as the supreme state among the English. During this period Wessex was forced to surrender to Mercia the West Saxon lands north of the Thames and its supremacy over Kent and the little kingdoms of the south-east. On the west, however, Wessex did not cease its gradual conquests over the West Welsh. It was during the eighth century that Wessex added to its possessions all that is now Somersetshire and the south-east parts of Devonshire, including Exeter and Crediton.

2. The worst blow to West Saxon power was when Offa set up his son-in-law as its king, and drove beyond the seas the Ætheling (prince) Egbert, who was forced to live many years as an exile at the court of Charles the Great, the king of the Franks. When Egbert was still with Charles, the great Frankish king was crowned Roman emperor at Rome on Christmas Day, 800, by the pope. Two years later, after his rival's death, Egbert was called home to be made king of the West Saxons (802). A skilful statesman and a bold warrior, he employed the first years of his reign in waging war against the

West Welsh, whose power he broke for ever, conquering all Devonshire up to the Tamar, and forcing the still unsubdued Cornishmen to pay him tribute. After Cenulf's death in 821, Mercia fell into such confusion that Egbert was tempted to attack it. In 825 he defeated the Mercians at a great battle at Ellandune (Ellington near Swindon), in Wiltshire. The Mercian supremacy collapsed in that single day, and henceforth Egbert was overlord, or Bretwalda, over all the English and most of the Welsh. Kent, Sussex, Essex were reconquered by Wessex; East Anglia, in its hatred of Mercia, willingly yielded to West Saxon supremacy; the Northumbrians submitted as soon as a West Saxon army approached their southern frontier; and the Welsh of North Wales were forced to make humble submission. Thus began that West Saxon overlordship out of which ultimately grew the united English monarchy.

3. Despite all his triumphs, Egbert did not die in peace. Though no foes ventured to stand up against him in Britain, new enemies came from beyond the sea, whose ravages soon threatened to undermine the West Saxon power. After some centuries of rest, fresh swarms of Teutonic barbarians began to seek for spoil in the lands which had once acknowledged Rome as their master. These were the fierce pirates known in England as *Danes*, in Germany as *East-men*, and Gaul as the *Northmen*. They came from Scandinavia, both from Norway and from Denmark. These regions were at this period much in the same condition as North Germany had been four centuries before, when it sent the Angles and Saxons to the shores of Britain. The country was too poor and remote to satisfy the wants of its inhabitants, who gradually got into the habit of seeking plunder and adventure at the expense of more fertile and sunny districts. The road by land southwards to the continent was blocked by the armies of Charles the Great, so the Norsemen took to the sea, and sought out the coasts of Britain and Ireland as places where booty might be won at no great risk to themselves. Greedy, ferocious, but terribly efficient, they could generally break down the resistance offered to them. They were still heathens, and took special delight in plundering Christian churches and monasteries. Before Offa's death they had begun to devastate Northumbria. In the latter years of Egbert they ventured to attack Wessex itself. The Cornish Welsh were so afraid of Egbert that they gladly made common cause with the new-comers.

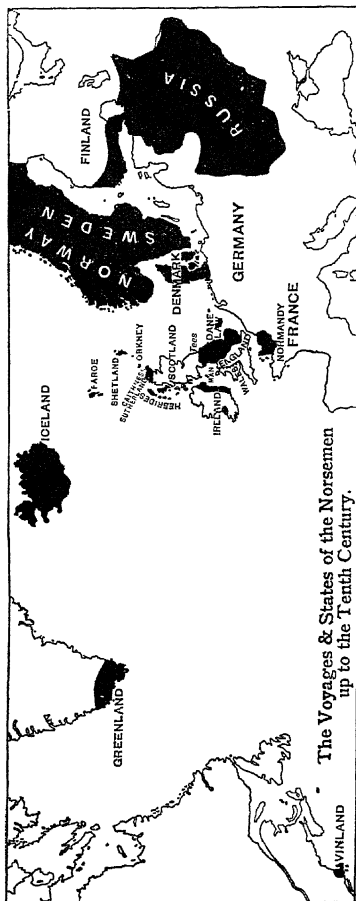
Egbert's last victory was gained at Hengston Down, in East Cornwall, over a joint force of Danes and Cornishmen.

4. Two years afterwards, in 839, the great king died, leaving to his pious and gentle son, Ethelwulf (839-858), the task of dealing with these terrible foes. Ethelwulf was a well-meaning king, but he was not strong enough to uphold West Saxon supremacy against such formidable rivals. The reign of Ethelwulf, 839-858.

He gained some victories over them, but the pirates soon found that they had only to persevere in their incursions to obtain what they sought. At first they had come in summer-time as plunderers, and were content to sail home in autumn, with their ships laden with booty, that they might revel in their own homes all through the dark and long northern winter. Before long they began to winter in England, and thereby found that the land was a pleasanter place to live in than their own country. Thus, like the English before them, they ceased to be mere plunderers, and began to wish to make settlements.

5. Great changes in Scandinavia soon increased the desire of the Danes to win new homes outside their mother-country. Up to this time Danes and Norsemen had been split up into a large number of little states, ruled by petty chieftains, called *jarls*. But now some of the chieftains proved themselves stronger than their rivals, fought against them, and conquered them after the same fashion in which some of the English kingdoms were constantly bringing their weaker neighbours into subjection. Before long there was a single king governing all Norway, another all Denmark, and another all Sweden. The most famous of these was Harold Fairhair (860-872), the first king of all Norway. So sternly did Harold rule over the conquered tribes that the freedom-loving Norsemen bitterly resented his supremacy. As they were unable to overthrow him in his own land, many of them abandoned their native valleys, and sought out new abodes for themselves in the lands which they had already got to know during their plundering expeditions. Thus the latter part of the ninth century saw a great Norse migration, which profoundly affected the whole of western Europe. The first places chosen for these new settlements were the islands that were nearest to the coasts of Norway. After this fashion *Iceland*, hitherto almost uninhabited, became a Norse island, and ultimately the special home of the bravest, strongest, and most typical of the Scandinavian race. Some of the Norsemen made their way beyond Iceland, settled in *Greenland*, and sent

out explorers, who discovered, five centuries before Columbus, the



continent of North America. The districts at which they touched, which were afterwards called New England, they called *Vinland*, the land of the vine.

6. More important for us than the movement westward was the migration southward, which now made the *Faroe Islands*, *Orkney* and *Shetland* the homes of Norse settlers. Before long the hardy seamen made their way to the coasts of Britain. They established themselves on the mainland of the extreme north, driving out the Celts from the northern parts of the modern Scotland, and establishing the Norse tongue and the Norse people in *Caithness* and *Sutherland*. This latter district, the southland, marked the southern limit of their settlements on the mainland. But along the western seaboard of Scotland the Norsemen penetrated very much further. They settled in the

Hebrides, and pushed their way from island to island until they had conquered the *Isle of Man*. *Ireland*, which had learnt little from the Romans save the Christian faith, and had stood outside the range of the English conquest, was now at last brought into the general current of great European movements by the establishment of Norse settlements upon its coasts. However, in *Ireland*, as in the *Hebrides* and southern islands, the invaders did not utterly displace the former inhabitants as the English had done in south-eastern Britain, and the Norse in *Orkney*, *Shetland*, and *Caithness*. Side by side with the new Danish states, the old Celtic tribal states still lived on; and perpetual wars were waged for many centuries between the new-comers and the older inhabitants.

The Norse settlements in Celtic lands.

7. At last South Britain itself was exposed to the Norse migration. The dependent kingdoms of the north-east of England were not strong enough to resist it, and before long East Anglia, southern Northumbria, and the northern parts of Mercia were conquered by the Danes. Nor were the British islands alone exposed to Danish settlement. Other swarms of Norsemen sought out new abodes on the Continent. A Swedish chief, named Rurik, conquered the Slavs on the east of the Baltic, and laid the foundations of the modern Russia. In the next generation they set up a Scandinavian state upon the north coast of Gaul, which took the name of Normandy, or land of the Northmen.

The first settlements in England and the continent.

8. Wessex was the last English state to feel the impact of the victorious Scandinavians. Yet even in Ethelwulf's lifetime Danish armies had taken up their winter quarters within his dominions, as, for example, in 855, when the Northmen settled for the cold season in Sheppey, an island off the coast of Kent, which had now virtually become a part of the West Saxon realm. During the short reigns of Ethelwulf's sons the full force of the Norse migration threatened Wessex with the fate of East Anglia and Mercia.

The attack on Wessex.

9. Ethelwulf died in 858, and was succeeded by his four sons in succession. After the Frankish fashion, he divided his dominions, making his eldest son, Ethelbald, king of the West Saxons, while Ethelbert, the second, became under-king of Kent. But after a short reign of two years Ethelbald died, whereupon Ethelbert became king of Wessex from 860 to 866. He was in turn succeeded by Ethelred, king of Wessex from 866 to 871. On Ethelred's death, Alfred obtained possession

The sons of Ethelwulf, 858-899.

of the throne, and ruled until 899. During the first three of these reigns the Danes perpetually troubled Wessex; but it was not until the last year of Ethelred's reign that they began the systematic conquest of that kingdom. Ethelred, a strenuous and mighty warrior, withstood the invaders with rare spirit and with partial success, and was ably supported by his younger brother, Alfred's the Ætheling Alfred. In one memorable year, 871, the year of West Saxons fought nine pitched battles against the battles, 871. Danes. The most famous of these was the battle of Ashdown on the Berkshire downs, where the invaders were so rudely repulsed that they withdrew for a time to their camp at Reading. Within a fortnight, however, they resumed the attack, and, after another fierce fight, Ethelred died, worn out with the strain and exposure involved in the resistance to them. Alfred, his fellow-worker, then a young man of twenty-three, at once assumed the monarchy of the West Saxons. He assailed the Danes so fiercely that they were glad to make peace and withdraw over the Thames. For the next few years they left Wessex to itself. During this period they completed the conquest of Mercia by dividing its lands amongst their leaders. When this process was once accomplished, Wessex was once more to feel the weight of their power.

10. In January, 878, the Danes again invaded Wessex. They were led by a famous chieftain, Guthrum, and fought under a banner bearing the sign of a raven. It was unusual Alfred saves Wessex, in those days to fight in winter, and Alfred was un- 878. prepared for their sudden onslaught. He was driven from Chippenham, where he was residing, and forced to withdraw, while the enemy overran his kingdom. But even in this crisis he kept up his courage. With a little band he made his way by wood and swamp to Athelney, an island amidst the marches of Mid Somerset, at the confluence of the Tone and Parret. There he built a fort, from which he kept fighting against the foe. Before long he was able to abandon his refuge and gather an army round him. In May he defeated Guthrum in a pitched battle at Edington in Wiltshire. The Danes fled in confusion to Chippenham, where they had entrenched a camp, and were pursued and besieged by Alfred. After a fortnight's siege, Guthrum was willing to make peace with his enemy. The Danes "swore mighty oaths that they would quit Alfred's realm, and that their king should receive baptism." Alfred stood godfather to Guthrum, and entertained him at Wedmore, in Somerset, for twelve days. For this reason

the treaty between Alfred and the Danes is often called the treaty of Wedmore. By it the Danes not only agreed to withdraw from Wessex; they left southern and western Mercia in the hands of Alfred, and contented themselves with the northern and eastern districts of Mercia, where they had already made an effective settlement. But they kept their hold over Essex and London, and besides this, were rulers over eastern Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria. Thus Alfred saved Wessex from the Danes, and in saving his own kingdom, he preserved all England from becoming a merely Danish land.

11. For a season there was peace between Alfred and the Danes. Seven years later more fighting broke out, and Alfred once more proved victorious. In 886 Guthrum was once more forced to make a disadvantageous peace, by which he yielded up London and its neighbourhood to the West Saxons. By the second treaty, called *Alfred and Guthrum's Peace*, the boundary between Alfred's kingdom and the lands of the Danes was fixed as follows: It went up the Thames as far as the river Lea, then up the Lea to its source, and thence to Bedford, from which town it continued up the Ouse to Watling Street. Beyond that it is not known for certain where the dividing-line ran, but it is often thought that it followed the old Roman road as far as Chester, which thus became the northern outpost of Alfred's kingdom. Thus West Saxon Mercia formed a great triangle, whose base was the Thames, whose other sides were the Watling Street and the Welsh frontier, and whose apex was the old Roman city of Chester. Within these limits Alfred ruled as he pleased. But the tradition of independence was still strong in Mercia, and Alfred thought it wise to set up a separate government for that part of the midland kingdom which now belonged to him. He made Ethelred, a Mercian nobleman, alderman of the Mercians, and ensured his fidelity by marrying him to his own daughter, Ethelflaed. Before long the many princes of Wales submitted to his overlordship, and promised to be as obedient to him as were Ethelred and his Mercians. Alfred thus ensured West Saxon supremacy over all southern Britain that was not governed by the Danes.

12. North of the boundary line the Danes still remained masters. They ruled the country after the Danish fashion, divided the lands among themselves, and forced the English to work for them. The Danish districts were called *law*, the *Danelaw*, because they were governed according to the law of

the Danes. But the Danelaw did not long keep itself distinct from the rest of England. The Danish conquerors were few in number.



Emery Walker sc.

and not very different, either in language or in manners, from the

English among whom they lived. They soon followed Guthrum's example, and became Christians. When they had renounced their old heathen gods, the chief thing that separated them from the English disappeared. Gradually they abandoned their own tongue and used the language of the English, which was not very unlike their own speech. The result was that English and Danes in the Danelaw were joined together in a single people, differing only from their West Saxon neighbours in the south because they still retained something of the fierceness and energy of the Danish pirates from whom some of them were descended. For many generations the mixed Danes and English of the north and midlands remained more warlike and vigorous than the sluggish West Saxons of purer English descent. Finally, however, it only became possible to distinguish the Danelaw from the rest of the country by the occurrence of certain Scandinavian suffixes in place-names such as "by," "ness," "force," "thwaite," and the like. Wherever such forms cluster thickly, as in Yorkshire and the northern midlands, there we know that the Danes had at one time settled most numerously.

13. Though the men of the Danelaw were better fighters, the greater civilization of the West Saxons still enabled them to exercise influence over the ruder north country. Moreover, while Wessex remained under Alfred and his successors a single state ruled by a strong king, the Danelaw was broken up into many petty states, each governed by its own jarl, or alderman. This division of the Danish power made it easy for Alfred to restore his overlordship over northern and eastern England, so that before he died he held quite as strong a position as ever Egbert had done. Thus the West Saxon supremacy, threatened with destruction by the Danish invasion, was restored on a broader basis after a very few years. The Danes had destroyed the old local lines of kings, whom Mercians and East Anglians had so long obeyed. This made it easier for the West Saxon kings to exercise authority over the north and east than had been the case in earlier times. Alfred had, in fact, done more than revive the overlordship of Egbert. He laid the foundations of that single monarchy of all England which was soon to become a reality under his son and grandson. "He was," says the *English Chronicle*, "king over the whole kin of the English, except that part which was under the sway of the Danes." But he still generally called himself "king of the West Saxons," like his predecessors. His self-restraint was wise, for the old English

Alfred's
restoration
of West
Saxon
supremacy.

local feeling still remained very strong, and the new blood in the Danelaw did something to strengthen it.

14. Alfred took care to prevent the renewal of Danish invasions by devising improved ways of marshalling the "fyrd," or local militia, in which every free man was bound in those days to serve. This force he divided into two parts, "so that always half were at home and half were on service." He also increased the number of fortresses in England.

Moreover, he saw that the best way of keeping the Norsemen out of his kingdom was by building ships and trying to defeat the enemy at sea, so as to prevent them landing at all. He caused a new type of ships to be made, which were bigger and stronger than the frail craft of the Danes. Yet all his pains could not prevent his kingdom being assailed once more by a chieftain named Haesten,

His wars
with
Haesten,
892.

who, being driven from the continent in 892, tried to effect a regular conquest of Wessex. After a good deal of bloodshed, Haesten withdrew baffled. After his failure little is heard of fresh Danish invasions for the best part of a century. There was plenty of fighting between English and Danes, but the Danes against whom Englishmen had to contend were the Danes settled in England. The great period of Danish settlement was at last over, not only in Britain, but also

on the continent. There, in 911, the Norsemen, under the leadership of a sea-king named Rolf, made their last and most famous conquest in the lower part of western France, on both sides of the lower Seine. From them the land took its name of "Normandy," or "land of the Northmen," and its people were called Normans, a softened form of Northmen. But just as the Norsemen in England quickly became English, so did their kinsfolk in France quickly become French. We shall see later how important these Normans became in English history.

15. In resisting the Danes, Alfred won great fame as a warrior. But there were many soldiers in that age of hard fighting who approached Alfred in military reputation. It is his peculiar glory that he was as strenuous and successful in the arts of peace as in the arts of war. He stands far above the mere soldier-king by his zeal to promote good laws, sound administration, and the prosperity and civilization of his people. He found England in a terrible state of desolation after the Danish invasions. He laboured with great zeal and no small measure of success to bring back to the land the blessings of peace and prosperity. He collected the old laws by which the West

Saxons had long been ruled, and put them together in a convenient form, long famous as the laws of Alfred. He encouraged trade, repeopled London, which the Danes had left desolate, and was a special friend to merchants and seafarers. He encouraged sailors to explore distant seas and tell him the results of their inquiries. He corresponded with the pope and many foreign kings, and sent gifts to foreign Churches, including the distant Christian Church of India. Yet his own country was always foremost in his mind. In England he restored the churches and monasteries that had been destroyed by the Danes, and strove to fill them with well-educated priests and monks. In his early years he had been appalled at the ignorance of his clergy. "There was not one priest south of the Thames," said he, "who could understand the Latin of the mass-book, and very few in the rest of England." To spread knowledge among those who did not understand Latin, he caused several books of importance to be translated, among them being Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and a treatise by Pope Gregory the Great on *Pastoral Care*. Moreover, he ordered the compilation of an *English Chronicle*, in which was set down all that was then known of the history of the English people, and which, continued in various monasteries up to the twelfth century, became from that time onward the chief source of our knowledge of Old English history, and the most remarkable of the early histories which any European people possesses written in its own language. He set up schools in the royal court, after the example of Charles the Great. As he found few West Saxons able to co-operate with him in these learned labours, he welcomed to his coast scholars from foreign lands, from Mercia, from Wales, and from the continent. The most famous of these was a Welshman named Asser, who became bishop of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and afterwards wrote Alfred's life. Alfred's work was the more remarkable since he was constantly troubled by a painful illness, and never succeeded in winning many efficient fellow-workers among his sluggish fellow-countrymen. Even more wonderful than what he did was the spirit in which he worked. His character is among the noblest and purest in all history. He was truth-telling, temperate, virtuous, high-minded, pious, liberal, and discreet, the friend of the poor, and so eager to uphold justice that he often administered the law himself, and always kept a watchful eye on the decisions of his judges. He died in 899, amidst the lamentations of his subjects, and has ever since been known as King Alfred the Great.

Death of
Alfred, 899.

CHAPTER VI

THE SUCCESSORS OF ALFRED AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ENGLISH MON- ARCHY (899-978)

Chief Dates :

- 899-924. Reign of Edward the Elder.
- 924-940. Reign of Athelstan.
- 940-946. Reign of Edmund the Magnificent.
- 946-955. Reign of Edred.
- 955-959. Reign of Edwy.
- 959-975. Reign of Edgar.
- 975-978. Reign of Edward the Martyr.

1. ALFRED was succeeded by his eldest son, Edward, called Edward the Elder, who had already been associated in the government during his father's lifetime. Though carefully educated, Edward showed no trace of his father's love for the arts of peace. He was, however, as strenuous a warrior as ever Alfred had been. He worthily carried on the great king's work of bringing together England into a single state. In this he was much helped by his brother-in-law, Ethelred of Mercia, and, after his death, by his sister Ethelflaed, whom he continued in the government of Mercia with the title of the Lady of the Mercians. Edward and his sister waged constant war against the Danes. They strengthened their frontier both against the Danes and the Welsh by building or restoring "boroughs," or fortified towns, from which they might attack the enemy in his own lands. A further step soon followed when the West Saxons and Mercians overstepped the line drawn by Alfred, and gradually conquered the Danelaw after much hard fighting. The most famous of these contests centred round the district dependent on the *Five Danish Boroughs* of Derby, Stamford, Nottingham, Leicester, and Lincoln. At the moment of their final contest Ethelflaed died. She had shown as much warlike skill as her brother, and had loyally worked with him. Edward felt so much stronger than Alfred that he appointed no successor to his sister,

but took over the government both of Danish and of English Mercia into his own hands. He next assailed East Anglia, and easily subdued it. Then came the turn of Northumbria, in which Deira, or Yorkshire, was ruled by a Danish jarl, while Bernicia, which had escaped Norse conquest, was governed by an independent English alderman. Edward prepared for his northern advance by building a fresh line of fortresses from Chester eastwards along the line of the Mersey. In 923 he made his first conquest of Northumbrian territory by taking possession of "Manchester in Northumbria."

2. By this time the rulers of Britain perceived that there was no use in fighting against the great West Saxon king. Immediately on the conquest of Mercia the kings of the Welsh and all their people sought Edward as their lord. At their head was Howel the Good, the famous law-giver, and the most distinguished of the Welsh princes for many generations. "And in 924," says the *Chronicle*, "then chose him for father and lord the king of the Scots and the whole nation of the Scots, and all those who dwell in Northumbria, whether English or Danes, and also the king of the Strathclyde Welsh and all the Strathclyde Welsh." This was the culminating act of Edward's reign. He died before the end of 924, when still a young man. Conscious of his increasing power, he was not content to call himself king of the West Saxons as Alfred had done. He preferred to describe himself as king of the English, or king of the Anglo-Saxons—that is, of the two races of Angles and Saxons which we collectively call the English. From his day onward the monarchy of England, though often threatened, became a permanent thing. Thus the West Saxon overlordship grew into the kingdom over all the English.

3. Three sons of Edward the Elder now ruled successively over the English. Of these, Athelstan, the eldest, was as vigorous a warrior as his father. He put an end to the dynasty of Danish princes that had hitherto reigned in Deira, and added that district to the dominions directly governed by him. He ruled, we are told, over all the kings that were in Britain. So firmly did his power seem established that foreign princes sought his alliance, and the greatest rulers of the age were glad to marry themselves or their kinsfolk to Athelstan's sisters. The empire of Charles the Great had now broken up, and separate kingdoms had arisen for the East and the West Franks, out of which the later kingdoms of Germany and France were soon to

arise. Henry the Fowler, king of the East Franks, or Germans, married his son Otto to Athelstan's sister Edith. This was the Otto who afterwards became the Emperor Otto the Great, the reviver of the Roman Empire and the founder of the great German monarchy, which annexed, so to say, the title of Roman emperors for itself. Other sisters of Athelstan were married to Charles the Simple, king of the West Franks, or French, and to Hugh, duke of the French, whose son, called Hugh Capet, finally put an end to the rule of the Carolings, or descendants of Charles the Great, and begun the Capetian dynasty which ruled over France as long as France retained the government of kings. The result of all these alliances was that no Old English king was so well known on the continent as Athelstan.

4. In 937 jealousy of their West Saxon overlord drew the dependent rulers of Britain into a strong coalition against him. The leaders of this were Constantine, king of Scots, the Danish kings of Dublin, and some of the Welsh princes. But Athelstan met the confederate army and crushed it at Brunanburh, a place probably situated in the north-west of England, though its exact site is unknown. This fight is commemorated in a magnificent war-song given in the *English Chronicle*. It ensured peace for the rest of Athelstan's lifetime. Three years later he died, in 940. Men called him Glorious Athelstan. He made many good laws, and was a great friend of the Church.

5. Athelstan's younger brother, Edmund, who had shared in the glory of Brunanburh, then became king. He was soon confronted by revolts of the Danes of northern Mercia and Deira. But he easily reconquered both the Five Boroughs and Danish Yorkshire. He then took Cumberland from its Welsh princes and gave it to Malcolm, king of Scots, "on the condition that he should be his fellow-worker as well by sea as by land." For these exploits he was called the Magnificent, or the Deed-Doer. His career was cut short in 946 through his murder by an outlaw.

6. Edmund left two sons, named Edwy and Edgar, but they were young children, and no one thought of making either of them king. The nobles turned rather to their uncle Edred, the youngest of Edward the Elder's sons, who was at once chosen king. Unlike his two brothers, Edred was weak in health and unable to play the warrior's part. But he was prudent enough to put the management of his affairs into the hands of the wisest man in all England. This was Dunstan, abbot

The battle of Brunanburh.
Edred.
946-955.

of Glastonbury, who was already famous for having reformed the lax state of the monks under his charge, and who now showed that he was a shrewd statesman as well as a zealous ecclesiastic. Under his guidance the West Saxon monarchy continued in its career of victory under its sickly king, though, as a rule, in those days a weak ruler meant an unlucky reign. Once more Northumbria was conquered from the Danes in 954, and with this event the unity of England seemed accomplished. Proud of his great power Edred was no longer content to call himself king of the English. He sometimes styled himself *emperor, king, and Cæsar of Britain*, as if to the English monarchy he had added the dominion over all the island. These titles must not be taken too seriously, yet they show that the aim now before the West Saxon house was nothing less than supremacy over all the British isles. Thus under Edred the work began by Alfred was completed. It was rendered the easier by the fact that Danes and English of the Danelaw had by this time become blended into a single people. Dunstan was wise enough to allow the men of the north country to retain their own laws and be ruled by their own earls. It was the best way to make them obedient to their West Saxon king. But the great difference of temper between north and south still remained, and there soon arose an opportunity for it to assert itself.

7. Edred died in 955, and his nephew Edwy, though hardly yet a man, was chosen king as the oldest member of the royal house available. Under him troubles soon began. The young king quarrelled with Dunstan, and drove him into Edwy.
955-959. banishment. The abbot was popular among the Northumbrians and Mercians, though he had many enemies among the West Saxon nobles who swayed the mind of the young king. It is very likely that after Dunstan's exile the rule of Edwy over the Northumbrians and Mercians became more severe than the mild government of Edred. Anyhow, Mercia and Northumbria rose in revolt, and declared that they would no longer have Edwy to reign over them. They then chose as their king the Ætheling Edgar, Edwy's younger brother. England was now so far united that even those who wished to divide it could only find a king in the sacred royal house of Wessex.

8. Edgar easily became king of the north and midlands. He at once recalled Dunstan from exile, and made him Edgar the
Peaceful,
959-975. bishop, first of Worcester, and afterwards of London as well. For the rest of his life Edwy reigned over Wessex alone. His early death in 959 resulted, however, in

the reunion of England. Thereupon the West Saxons chose Edgar as their king. From that day till his death Edgar ruled over all England, and, alone of the great West Saxon kings, ruled without the need of fighting for his throne. For that reason men called him Edgar the Peaceful. Again, as under Eðred, Dunstan became the king's chief adviser. He was made archbishop of Canterbury, and the crown became powerful and the country prosperous under his strong but conciliatory government. A great proof of Dunstan's willingness to make sacrifices to keep the peace was to be seen in the dealings between England and Scotland. In the weak days of division the Scots had taken possession of the border fortress of Edinburgh, hitherto the northernmost Northumbrian town. To avoid war and obtain the goodwill of the Scots, Edgar yielded up to their king the Northumbrian district called Lothian. Up to now the Scots had been Highland Celts, but since Edmund's cession of Cumbria the Scottish kings had had Welsh subjects. Now they had English subjects also. And before long the English element grew, until the modern Scottish Lowlands became English-speaking and very like England, and only the Highlands retained the Celtic tongue and manners of the old Scots.

9. The kings and chieftains of Britain gladly acknowledged the overlordship of a monarch so just and strong as Edgar. It is said that on one occasion he went to Chester, where he met Edgar as emperor of Britain. six under-kings, who all took oaths to be faithful to him; and that the six kings rowed their overlord in a boat up the Dee to the Church of St. John's, outside the walls. The six were the king of Scots, his vassal the king of Cumberland, the Danish king of Man, and three Welsh kings. Even the Danish kings who ruled over the coast towns of Ireland submitted themselves to his dominion. It was no wonder that Edgar, like Edwy, took upon himself high-sounding titles. He called himself *emperor*, *Augustus*, and *Basileus* of Britain. Under him the process that begins with Alfred attains its culminating point. Edgar was the most mighty of English kings before the Norman conquest.

10. At home Edgar ruled sternly, but so justly, that the only fault that his subjects could find with him was that he loved foreigners too much. The chief event of this time was a religious revival, which Dunstan did much to foster. Dunstan and the Benedictine revival. Despite Alfred's strenuous efforts at reform, the Church remained corrupt and sluggish. In particular, the monasteries were in a very lax state. Dunstan was first famous as the reformer of his own abbey of Glastonbury. He became

more eager for reform after his exile. When abroad he had seen the good results which had happened from a monastic revival that had already been brought about on the continent. Brought back to power, he strove with all his might to revive in England the spirit of the austere *Benedictine rule* which derived its name from St. Benedict of Nursia, the father of all later monasticism, who lived in the sixth century, and whose system St. Augustine had first introduced into this country. Dunstan was anxious to make the easy-going monks of England live the same strict life of poverty, chastity, and obedience which St. Benedict had enjoined, and which he had seen in operation during his banishment. Moreover, he felt sure that the career of the monk was higher and nobler than that of the secular clerk, who held property, married, and generally lived a self-indulgent and easy-going life. By this time many of the monasteries of earlier days had been changed into what were called churches of *secular canons*—that is to say, they were served by clergymen who did not take the monastic vows, but lived in the world side by side with laymen. Dunstan was disgusted at the lax ways of the secular canons, and did his best to drive them out of their churches, and put Benedictine monks in their place. But the canons were often men of high birth, and had powerful friends among the nobles, who disliked Dunstan's policy even in matters of state. Hence the attempt to supersede canons by monks met with much opposition, and Dunstan, who was a very prudent man, took care not to go too far in upholding the monks. Yet he managed to establish monks in his own cathedral of Christ Church, Canterbury, which henceforth remained a Benedictine monastery until the Reformation. Some of his fellow-workers were less cautious than Dunstan, and the struggle of monk and canon led to almost as much fighting as the contest between the West Saxons and the Mercians. As long as Edgar lived, however, Dunstan managed to keep the two parties from open hostilities.

11. Edgar died in 975, and with him ended the greatness of the West Saxon house. He left two sons by different mothers. Their names were Edward and Ethelred. North and south, Edward the friends of monks and friends of canons, quarrelled as to which of the two boys should become king. For the moment the influence of Dunstan secured the throne for Edward, the elder son. For four years the great archbishop went on ruling the kingdom as in the days of Edgar. But his task was much harder now that he was virtually single-handed. In 978 the young

king was stabbed in the back, it was believed, at the instigation of his step-mother, who wished her own son, Ethelred, to mount the throne. This cruel death gave Edward the name of Edward the Martyr. His half-brother, Ethelred II., succeeded to the throne prepared for him by his mother's crime.

12. Dunstan's last important public act was to crown the new monarch. Soon afterwards the great archbishop withdrew from political affairs, and devoted what life was still left to him to the government of the Church and the carrying on of the monastic revival. He lived long enough to see the peace, which Edgar and he had upheld, utterly banished from the land, and to witness the ruin of the religious reformation amidst the tumults of a dreary period of civil strife and renewed invasion. He was the first great English statesman who was not a king and a warrior. In after days monks, who wrote his life, glorified him as the friend of monks with such excessive zeal that the wise statesman, who did so much to bring about the unity of England, was hidden underneath the monastic zealot and the strenuous saint. Yet, both as a prelate and as a politician, Dunstan did a great work for his country. In him the impulse to union and civilization, which began with Alfred, attained its highest point. He closes the great century which begins with the treaty of Chippenham, and ends with the murder of Edward the Martyr.

CHAPTER VII

THE DECLINE OF THE ENGLISH KINGDOM AND THE DANISH CONQUEST (978-1042)

Chief Dates :

- 978-1016. Reign of Ethelred the Unready.
- 1002. Massacre of St. Brice's Day.
- 1013. Sweegen's conquest of England.
- 1016. Rivalry of Edmund Ironside and Cnut.
- 1017-1035. Reign of Cnut.
- 1035-1037. Regency of Harold Harefoot.
- 1037-1040. Reign of Harold Harefoot.
- 1040-1042. Reign of Harthacnut.

1. THE long reign of Ethelred II. (978-1016) was a period of ever-deepening confusion. At first the king was a boy, and the nobles managed things as they wished. But after Ethelred the Ethelred became a man things grew steadily worse. *Unready*, The son of Edgar had none of the great qualities of 978-1016. his race. Quarrelsome, jealous, and suspicious, he was always irritating his nobles by trying to win greater power for himself. Yet he was too weak and foolish to know what to do with the authority which he inherited. In scorn men called him Ethelred the *Unready*—that is, the *Redeless*, the man without *rede*, or good counsel. Under his nerveless sway the unity of the kingdom began to break up. Local jealousies and personal feuds set the great men by the ears, and the guiding hand of a wise monarch was no longer to be expected.

2. To make matters worse the Danish invasions soon began again. Now that the Danes in England had become Englishmen their kinsfolk beyond sea, learning the helplessness of the land, again began to send plundering expeditions to its shores. Ethelred was too cowardly and lazy to meet the pirate hordes with an adequate force of armed men. He persuaded his nobles to impose a tax on land, whereby a large sum of money was collected to buy them off. The Danes took the bribe and departed, but naturally they came again and wanted more. *Renewal of the Danish invasions.*

Before long *Danegeld*, so this tax was called, was regularly levied, but every year the horrors of Danish invasion became worse and worse. As another means of conciliating the Danes, Ethelred married Emma of Normandy, the daughter of the duke of the Normans, who was himself a Norseman by descent, and the ally of the Danish kings.

3. In the same year as his marriage, Ethelred, with equal folly and treachery, ordered all the Danes that happened to be living in England to be put to death. The day chosen for this evil deed was St. Brice's Day, November 13, 1002. Tidings of the massacre only served to infuriate the Danes in Denmark; and Swegen, their king, resolved to revenge his slaughtered countrymen by undertaking a regular conquest of Ethelred's kingdom. The state of the Scandinavian north was different from what it had been in the days of Alfred. There was now a strong king ruling all Denmark, and another ruling all Norway. In earlier days the Danes came in comparatively small and detached bands, whose greatest hope was to conquer and colonize some one district of England. It was now possible for the king of all Denmark to invade England with an army big enough to tax all the resources of the country. In 1003 Swegen carried out his threat. He came to England with a large fleet and army, and set to work to conquer it. Ethelred made few attempts to organize resistance to him, and, though some districts fought bravely and checked the Danish advance, there was no central force drawn from the whole country capable of withstanding the foe. For the next ten years England suffered unspeakable misery. One famous incident of the struggle was the cruel death of the archbishop of Canterbury, Ælfheah, or Alphege, whom the Danes, after a drunken revel, pelted to death with bones because he would not consent to impoverish the poor husbandmen who farmed his lands by raising from them the heavy ransom demanded by the invaders. Alphege was declared a saint, and his memory long held in honour.

4. At last Englishmen began to see it was no use resisting Swegen, or upholding so wretched a king as Ethelred. In 1013 the Danish king again appeared in England and easily conquered the greater part of the country. Thereupon Ethelred fled to Normandy, the country of his wife. His withdrawal left Swegen the real ruler of England. Had he been a Christian, the English might well have chosen him as

their king. As it was, some districts still resisted when Swegen died in 1014.

5. The Danish soldiers chose Swegen's son Cnut as their king. Cnut was as good a soldier as his father. Moreover, he was a Christian and a wise and prudent man. But the English still regretted their old king, and some of them foolishly asked Ethelred to come back from Normandy and take up his kingship again. Ethelred returned, and war went on between him and Cnut until 1016, when Ethelred died.

Ethelred's
return,
1014, and
death, 1016.

6. Ethelred's successor was a man of very different stamp. Edmund, his son before his marriage with Emma, was a strenuous warrior, so valiant and persistent that men called him Edmund Ironside. In him Cnut found a worthy foe, and a mighty struggle ensued between the two rivals, which made the year 1016 as memorable in military history as the "year of battles" in the midst of which Alfred mounted the throne. Six pitched battles were fought, the most famous of which was one at Assandun (now Ashington), in Essex, in which Cnut won the day. In the long run neither side obtained a complete triumph over the other, and before the end of the year the two kings met at Olney, an island in the Severn, near Gloucester, where they agreed to divide England between them. By the treaty of Olney, Cnut took Northumbria and Mercia, and Edmund, Wessex. A little later Edmund died, and in 1017 the nobles of Wessex, weary of fighting, chose Cnut as their ruler.

The rivalry
of Edmund
Ironside and
Cnut, 1016.

7. Cnut thus became king, first of part and then of the whole of England, very much as Edgar had done. Though his real claim to the throne was not the choice of the people, but his right as a conquerer, he soon proved himself an excellent king. Under him the prosperity of Edgar's days was renewed. He sent home most of his Danish troops, chose English advisers, and married Emma, Ethelred's widow, so as to connect himself as closely as possible with the West Saxon royal house. He promised Danes and English in England to rule according to King Edgar's law. But Cnut was king of Denmark as well as of England, and a few years later became king of Norway also. Visions of a great northern empire rivalling the realm of the German emperors, who still called themselves emperors of Rome, may well have floated before his mind. But he was wise enough to make England, not Denmark, the centre of his power. Rough as England then was, Scandinavia was still

Cnut,
1017-1035.

runder. It was still largely heathen; and the only way in which the power of Cnut could be kept together there was for him to use English bishops and monks to help him in civilizing and teaching the faith to his born subjects in the north. But though Englishmen thus found new careers in the service of their conqueror, the cares of his great empire compelled Cnut to absent himself from England for long periods. Besides necessary journeys to his northern kingdoms, he made a pilgrimage to Rome, whence he wrote a touching letter to his subjects, declaring that he had "vowed to live a right life in all things. to rule justly and piously, and to administer just judgment to all." He steadily lived up to the high ideal thus set out before him, and in every way proved himself to be one of the best of our kings. He was enabled to rule his realm strongly, as he kept up a sort of standing army in a force of two or three thousand *House carles*, or palace guards, whom he paid well and kept under discipline. It was dangerous to rebel against a monarch with such a force always ready at his disposal.

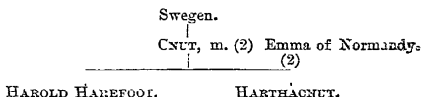
8. Early in his reign Cnut divided England into four parts. One of these, Wessex, he kept for himself, but the other three, Mercia, Northumberland, and East Anglia, he handed over to be governed by great *earls*, or, as they had been called in earlier days, aldermen. Before his death he seems also to have assigned Wessex to an earl. For this important post he chose a wealthy, eloquent, and shrewd Englishman named Godwin, whom he married to a lady of the Danish royal stock, and to whom he showed many other signs of favour. As long as Cnut lived these great earls remained faithful to him, but their establishment was a dangerous experiment. They were necessarily entrusted with a great deal of power. When they had become well established in their jurisdictions they made themselves the centres of the old local traditions that still remained strong, despite a century and a half of centralization. Things grew worse when son succeeded father in the earldoms as in the ancient sub-kingdoms that had preceded them. Finally, the great earldoms revived in fact, if not in name, the separatist feelings of Mercia, Northumbria, and Wessex. The next half-century showed the realm of Edgar gradually splitting up into its ancient threefold division.

9. Cnut died in 1035. He left two sons, Harold, the firstborn, and Harthacnut, his son by Emma of Normandy. A meeting of the wise men took place at Oxford to decide how the succession was to be settled. Party feeling ran high, and Leofric, earl of Mercia, stood in fierce antagonism to Godwin, earl of Wessex.

Godwin and the West Saxons wished to make Harthacnut king, but he was away in Denmark, and this fact played into the hands of Leofric, who was supported by north and midlands in his efforts to uphold the cause of Harold. Finally, as a compromise, it was agreed to make Harold regent of all England, on behalf of himself and his absent brother.

This suggests that a division of the kingdom was contemplated, but for more than a year England had no king at all. However, Harthacnut abode obstinately in Denmark, and neither Godwin nor Emma could long maintain the rights of an absentee claimant. In 1037 Harold was definitely chosen king. He drove Emma out of the country, and reigned until his death in 1040. Harthacnut was then at Bruges, in Flanders, where his mother lived, and was waiting with an army in the hope of invading England. He was at once sent for, and elected king of all England. He showed great sternness to his enemies, casting his dead brother's body into a sewer, and levying heavy taxes on those who had resisted his authority. He was much under Emma his mother's influence, and to please her called home from Normandy her son by King Ethelred, whose name was Edward. However, Harthacnut proved a bad ruler, and, says the *Chronicle*, "did nothing like a king during his whole reign." In 1042 he died suddenly at the wedding-feast of one of his nobles. With him expired ignominiously the Danish line of kings which had begun so well with his father. The influence of Emma and Godwin secured the succession for his half-brother Edward, and Englishmen rejoiced that the son of Ethelred had obtained his true natural right to the throne of his ancestors.

GENEALOGY OF THE DANISH KINGS



CHAPTER VIII

THE REIGNS OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AND HAROLD (1042-1066)

Chief Dates :

- 1042. Accession of Edward the Confessor.
- 1052. Godwin's return from exile, and death.
- 1064. Harold's Welsh war.
- 1066. Jan. 5, Death of Edward the Confessor. Jan. 6, Accession of Harold, son of Godwin. Sept. 25, Battle of Stamford Bridge. Oct. 14, Battle of Hastings. Dec. 25, Coronation of William the Conqueror. ,

1. EDWARD, the new king, was nearly forty years old when he was called to the throne of his ancestors. Driven from England as a mere child, he had been brought up in his mother's land of Normandy, and was Norman rather than English in speech, manners, and tastes. A pious, affectionate, gentle, well-educated man, his outlook on life was that of the cultivated Norman cleric rather than that of the hard-fighting English warrior-king. His austerity and religious zeal gave him such a reputation for sanctity that he was canonized after his death, and became famous among royal saints as *Edward the Confessor*. But he was of weak health, feeble character, and somewhat childish disposition. He was too old and sluggish to learn anything fresh, and too wanting in self-confidence to be able to live without favourites and dependants. Under such a weakening the government of the country passed largely into the hands of the great earls, such as Siward of Northumbria, Leofric of Mercia, and, above all, Godwin of Wessex. It was Godwin who had secured Edward his throne, and for long the king leant upon his strong and resolute counsel. Godwin's chief helpers were his vigorous young sons, chief among whom were Harold and Tostig, who held dependent earldoms under their father. Godwin's daughter Edith became King Edward's wife, and for a time all seemed to go well. But Edward had little sympathy with his wife's strenuous kinsfolk, and gradually gave his chief confidence to

Norman clerks, soldiers, and adventurers, who crossed over to England, hoping to win a career in a country whose monarch was so devoted to Normans and Norman ways. Thus it happened that England, which had withstood successfully all foreign influence when ruled by her Danish sovereigns, was threatened with something like foreign domination as the result of the restoration of the old line of kings.

2. The Normans had many great qualities that explain Edward's devotion to the land of his mother's kinsfolk. Though little more than a hundred years had passed since Rolf and his Normandy followers had established themselves in their new and the homes in northern France, the Norman duchy had Normans. already won a notable place for itself in western Europe. The same ready sympathy for the people among whom their lot was cast, which had rapidly made Englishmen of the Northmen of the Danelaw, had made Frenchmen of the Northmen on the banks of the Seine. They had dropped their old tongue and spoke French. They had adopted French customs and manners. But like the Anglo-Danes of England, the Normans retained much of the energy and fierceness of their pirate ancestors. They were more active, enterprising, and vigorous than most Frenchmen. They took up with every new movement, were great champions of the growing authority of the Church, and were learning the newest fashions of fighting, ruling, and holding land. Their duke, though a subject of the French king, was quite as powerful as his master, and was generally strong enough to restrain his turbulent, unruly subjects. The duke of the Normans at that time was Edward's cousin William. William had come to the throne as a child with a disputed title. But he had from earliest manhood shown so much activity and skill that he had put down the revolts of his fierce nobles, and made himself almost a despot. The gentle English king always looked up greatly to his stern cousin, and gladly took his advice.

3. From the beginning of the reign many Normans were raised by royal favour to eminent positions in Church and State in England. They were not always the best of their class, for Edward had very little discrimination in his friend-^{The Normans in England.}ships. One Norman friend of Edward's was a bishop, "who," said the English chronicler, "did nought bishop-like;" and a Norman raised by Edward to an English earldom became infamous in his new home as the "timid earl." Highest in rank among Edward's Norman favourites was Robert, abbot of Jumièges,

who, to the disgust of Englishmen, was made archbishop of Canterbury. After ten years the Normans had won so many places and estates that a loud outcry was raised against them. Godwin and his sons, who gradually lost all influence over the king, made themselves the spokesmen of the national hatred of the foreigners. In 1051 they gathered together an army and prepared to drive the Normans from court. But the old jealousy of Wessex and its earl was still strong in the north and midlands. Siward of Northumbria and Leofric of Mercia took sides with Edward and his Normans against the house of Godwin. Godwin could not at the moment resist such odds. His army melted away; and the exile of he and his sons were banished, and his daughter was Godwin, sent by her husband into a nunnery. Soon after, as 1051. if to complete the Norman triumph, William, duke of Normandy, came to England with a great company of Frenchmen, and was royally received by his cousin. Edward, who had no children and no near relations, seems to have promised William to make him his successor to the throne. Thus the permanence of Norman influence seemed assured.

4. Godwin and Harold did not remain long in exile. In 1052 they gathered together a fleet and an army, sailed up the Thames, and beset London. Edward and his Normans collected another army to withstand them; but the English people were so strongly on Godwin's side that even Edward's soldiers were loath to fight for him. They said to each other that they ought not to fight against their own countrymen, and insisted upon negotiating with the invaders. Edward was powerless in their hands, as there were not enough Normans to make a good show in a battle. The result was that Godwin and Harold were restored to their earldoms, "as fully, and freely as they had possessed them before." "And then," writes the English chronicler, "they outlawed all the Frenchmen who had judged unjust judgments and had given ill counsel, save only such as they agreed upon whom the king liked to have with him and were true to his people." Archbishop Robert and two other Norman bishops escaped with difficulty beyond sea; and Englishmen were appointed as their successors, the new archbishop's name being Stigand. Edith came back from her cloister to her husband's court. The threatened tide of Norman invasion was driven back for the rest of Edward's lifetime.

5. Godwin died soon after his restoration, and Harold then became earl of the West Saxons. He was a brave warrior and a

shrewd and self-seeking statesman, strong enough to dominate the will of his weak brother-in-law and control his policy. When Earl Siward died Harold made his brother Tostig Harold, earl of Northumbria in his place, while his younger of the West brothers, Gurth and Leofwine, were made earls of East Saxons. Anglia and Kent. Two-thirds of England was now directly ruled by the house of Godwin. After this Leofric of Mercia was the only great earl who was independent of Harold. He soon died, but his son Ælfgar secured the succession to Mercia, and tried to strengthen himself by making an alliance with his Welsh neighbours. The Welsh were excellent soldiers, but as a rule they were too much divided under the rule of rival kings, and too jealous of each other to be able to make headway against the English. It happened, however, at this time that a very powerful Welsh prince, Griffith ap Llewelyn—that is, “son of Llewelyn,” had defeated all his rivals, and had made himself king over all Wales. Griffith married Earl Ælfgar’s daughter, Ealdgyth, and became his close friend; but Ælfgar soon died, and the Mercian alliance profited him very little. At last, in 1064, Harold led an army into Wales, and overran the country. The Welsh suffered so cruelly that they abandoned their own king, and made their submission to Harold. Soon Griffith was murdered by some of his own subjects, and Harold divided his dominions among Bleddyn and Rhiwallon, two representatives of a rival family. For the first time since the days of Offa, the English boundary was pushed westwards at the expense of the Welsh as far as the Clwyd, the Radnor moors, and the Usk. Harold himself married Griffith’s widow, the daughter of the Mercian earl. Her brother Edwin, now earl of Mercia, was not strong enough to give Harold any trouble.

THE HOUSE OF GODWIN

Godwin.

KING HAROLD.	Tostig.	Gurth.	Leofwine.	Edith,
m. Ealdgyth,				m. EDWARD THE
dan. of Ælfgar.				CONFESSOR.

THE HOUSE OF LEOFRIC

Leofric.

Ælfgar.

Edwin.

Morcar.

Ealdgyth,
m. (1) Griffith ap
Llewelyn; (2) HAROLD,
son of Godwin.

6. The only foes Harold now feared were those of his own household. His brother Tostig ruled so badly over the Northumbrians

that they rose in revolt against him, and forced Edward to banish him. They chose as his successor Morcar, the brother of Edwin of Mercia. It was the greatest blow that Harold's power had received, and was the

more formidable since the king's health was now breaking up. Since the expulsion of the Normans, Edward had withdrawn himself more and more from politics. His chief interest now was in building a new monastery dedicated to St. Peter on a marsh hard by the river Thames, some distance to the west of London, in a region which took from the king's foundation its later name of Westminster. He just lived long enough to witness the completion of the magnificent church which Norman craftsmen had erected for him in honour of his favourite saint. On Innocents' Day, December 28, the abbey church was dedicated, but Edward was too ill to be present. He died on January 5, 1066, and the very next day was buried behind the high altar of St. Peter's Church. Miracles, it was believed, were worked by his remains as attestation of his claims to sanctity.

7. The same day that Edward was buried, Harold was chosen king, and crowned in the new abbey. For many years he had been

king in all but name, and it seemed the easiest course to give him the office which his ambition had doubtless long coveted. But though the old English throne

was in a sense elective, the choice of Harold constituted a real revolution. Save in the case of the Danish kings, the *Witenagemot*, or Council of the Nobles, had never gone outside the sacred house of Cerdic in their choice of the ruler. All that election had really meant hitherto was some liberty of deciding which member of the royal house should mount the throne, and this freedom of choice was limited in substance to preferring a brother of the late king who was old enough to govern, to his children who were still under age. Even the election of Cnut was no real exception, since it was simply the recognition of the power of a foreign conqueror. But Harold was in possession of power, and it is hardly likely that the *Witenagemot* had much really to say in the matter. The nearest heir to the dead king was his great-nephew, Edgar the Ætheling, a grandson of Edmund Ironside, a mere boy, and very little known. Practically the same course was pursued as in France, where in 987 Hugh Capet, the greatest of the French nobles, was made king in preference to the heir of the house of Charles the

Great. French history showed that Hugh, though the strongest of dukes, was the weakest of kings. It was the same with Harold. He had not the mysterious dignity which came from membership of the sacred royal house. His brother earls were jealous of him.

him by Edward in 1051. Two or three years before his accession Harold had been shipwrecked in France. The lord of the district where the wreck had taken place threw him into prison. William of Normandy's preparations for invasion. William procured his release, and entertained him with great kindness at his court. However, before he allowed Harold to go home, William had forced him to take an oath that he would help him to become king of England after Edward's death. The Norman duke now claimed the crown as King Edward's heir, and denounced Harold as a perjurer for breaking his oath. He began at once making preparations for invading England, and many adventurers from all parts of France joined with his Norman subjects in an expedition which held out great prospects of glory, pay, and booty. Moreover, the pope gave his support to the expedition. Stigand, the archbishop of Canterbury, had taken the place of Robert of Jumièges without asking the pope's permission, and had offended Rome by other irregularities. All therefore who joined William were looked upon as fighting for the cause of the Church.

9. Before William's expedition was ready another trouble came upon England. Tostig, the sometime earl of Northumbria, hearing of his brother's elevation to the throne, was anxious to win his earldom back by force. With this object he made an alliance with the king of the Norwegians, Harold *Hardrada*—that is, *Hard rede*, or Stern in Counsel. *Hardrada* was a true descendant of the Norse pirates, and had had adventures and expeditions in many lands. He gladly took up Tostig's cause, hoping, perhaps, that if successful he might, like Cnut, rule over England as well as his own land. In September the fleet of Harold and Tostig sailed up the Humber. Earl Morcar came to defend his earldom, and his brother Edwin joined him with the Mercian levies. But they were defeated by the invaders at Fulford, and on September 20 the victors took possession of York.

10. When the Norwegians landed, King Harold was in the south, waiting anxiously lest William should cross the Channel. He at once proceeded northwards, and joined his forces with those of the northern earls. On his arrival *Hardrada* and Tostig took up a position at *Stamford Bridge* on the Derwent, a few miles east of York. On September 25 Harold fell stoutly upon them. The English won a complete victory. Tostig and the Norwegian king were slain, and the survivors of the northern host gladly made peace, and returned

Battle of
Stamford
Bridge,
Sept. 25.

home. It was the last of the great Norse invasions, and the defeat of so famous a hero as Hardrada proved once more the skill of Harold as a soldier.

11. Three days after the battle of Stamford Bridge, William of Normandy crossed the Channel. Landing at Pevensey in Sussex, he made Hastings his headquarters, and set up there a wooden castle. On news of his arrival reaching William, York, Harold at once hurried southwards to meet the Sept. 28. Norman invasion. But Edwin and Morcar did not follow him, though he had saved the latter his earldom. Very few of the heroes of Stamford Bridge accompanied Harold against his new enemy; and he paused in London while the levies of the south country poured in to reinforce his scanty ranks. Tidings came that the Normans were horribly wasting the lands near the coast, and Harold resolved to march out of London and give battle to them. He led his troops to within seven miles of *Hastings*, when he halted, took up a strong position on the hill, on which the town of Battle now stands, and passed the night of October 13. The place was far removed from human habitations, and had not even a name. For that reason the fight which was to be fought next day took its name from Hastings, the nearest town.

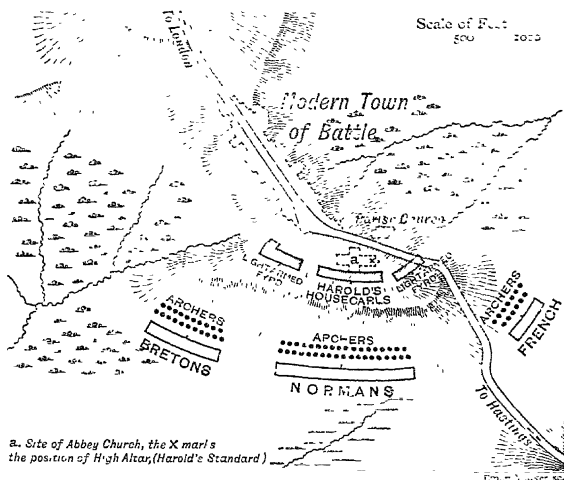
12. Early on the morning of October 14 the English saw William and his Normans arrayed on another ridge, some distance to the south of the hill on which they were posted. The Battle of great battle began soon afterwards. It was a struggle, Hastings, not only between two nations, but between two different Oct. 14. schools of warfare. After the fashion of both English and Danes, Harold's army fought on foot. The best soldiers, including Harold's house-carles and personal followers, were arrayed on the top of the hill, facing southwards towards the enemy. They were armed with helmets and long coats of chain-mail, and their chief weapons were axes, broadswords, and heavy javelins, which they hurled at the enemy. They stood shoulder to shoulder in close array, and protected themselves with their long, kite-shaped shields, which interlocked with each other so as to form a *shield-wall*, which it was difficult for the enemy to break through. On the two wings of the main array, where the precipitous nature of the ground made a frontal attack very difficult, were stationed the swarms of ill-covered but zealous countryfolk, who had flocked to the king's standards to defend their country against the foreigner. Harold ordered his troops to maintain their close order, and on no account to break their ranks by pursuing the enemy.

13. The Normans prepared to fight after the newer fashion which had recently grown up in France. The infantry, mostly archers, were sent on in advance to wear down the enemy by volleys of arrows. But their shafts had very little effect, and the shield-wall still remained unbroken on the crest of the hill. Then came the turn of the cavalry, in whom William placed his chief confidence. The best soldiers of the Norman host fought on horseback, wearing helmets and armour very similar in pattern to that of the English, and protecting themselves by great shields, also of the same type as those of their foes. Their chief weapon was a long lance, but they also used swords at close quarters. In the centre of the Norman line was Duke William with his brothers, Odo, bishop of Bayeux, a hard-fighting prelate, and Robert, count of Mortain. Around him were his Normans, and against them the shield-wall of Harold. The right and left wings of William's army were held by his French and Breton mercenaries; these were opposed to the lightly armed levies on the wings of the English host.

14. Time after time the Norman army charged on horseback up the slopes of the hill. Each time they failed to break through the impenetrable shield-wall, and retired discomfited to their original position. But William was a shrewder commander than the English king. His troops were better equipped, and more easily moved; they could shift their position and method of attack at will; while all that the English could do was to stand firm in their ranks and await each fresh assault. Finding Harold's centre quite impenetrable, William threw his main energy into assailing the lightly armed troops of the wings. His archers discharged repeated flights of arrows, which spread havoc among the unarmoured English peasantry; and in order to lure them to break through their close formation, the Norman cavalry were ordered by their duke to pretend to run away. The English believed that they had gained the victory. Rashly breaking their ranks, they rushed down the slopes of the hill in pursuit. Then the Normans turned, and it was soon found that in open fighting the bravest of foot soldiers were no match against the mail-clad horsemen. The Normans thus gained access to the crest of the hill, and furiously attacked the tried troops on Harold's centre, who alone still maintained a semblance of order. The Norman archers now shot their arrows high into the air, so that they might fall on the English from above. One shaft struck Harold in the eye, and he fell, bravely fighting to the

The victory
of William
and the
death of
Harold.

last, close by his own standard. With him died his brothers Gurth and Leofwine, and the bravest of his followers. The day was now won, and at nightfall the Normans pitched their tents upon the blood-stained field. In pious memory of his victory William erected an abbey for monks on the site of the English lines, and called it the *Abbey of the Battle*, a name which also attached itself to the little town that grew up round its walls. The high altar of the



BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

abbey church marked the spot on the crest of the ridge where Harold's banner had once stood.

15. In the weeks succeeding the battle William busied himself with securing the strong places in the south-eastern counties. Edwin and Morcar at last appeared in London with their troops. The Witenagemot met and chose Edgar the Ætheling as king of the English. Thereupon the two earls went home with their men, leaving London and the south to depend upon their own resources. William then advanced almost to the gates of London, but made no effort to attack it. He next marched up the Thames

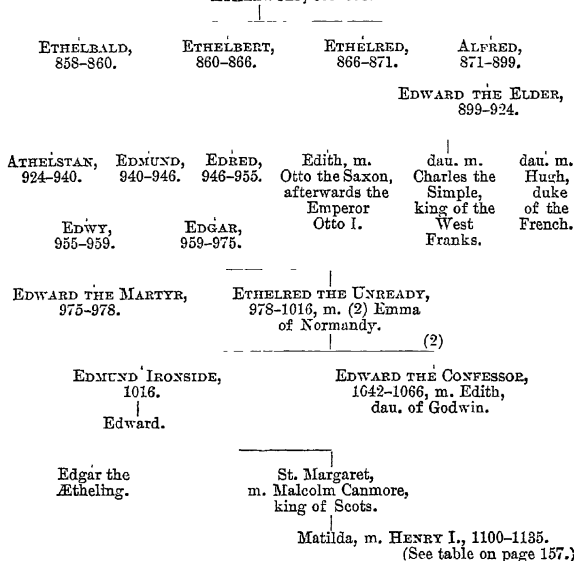
The advance
to London
and corona-
tion of
William I.

valley as far as Wallingford, crossed the river, and approached London from the north, so as to cut off all hope of success in case the two earls once more changed their minds, and reassembled their levies. The best soldiers of Wessex and the south lay dead at Hastings, and there was no hope of opposing the conqueror without the help of the north and midlands. In these circumstances the West Saxon nobles thought further resistance useless. With Edgar at their head, they sought out William and accepted him, like another Cnut, as their king. On Christmas Day, December 25, William was crowned king in Westminster Abbey, which thus within a year of its completion saw two coronations and one royal burial. The first stage of the Norman conquest of England was completed when the duke of the Normans became the king of the English.

GENEALOGY OF OLD ENGLISH KINGS OF THE HOUSE
OF CERDIC

EGBERT, 802-839.

ETHELWULF, 839-858.



CHAPTER IX

ENGLISH LIFE BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST

1. BEFORE the Norman conquest England stood almost isolated from the rest of the world. Not only was there little intercourse between our island and lands beyond sea; there were few dealings between different districts in England, and each single group of villagers lived a life of its own, self-sufficing and self-contained, and cut off from intercourse with any but its nearest neighbours. The English were a nation of farmers and herdsmen, tilling their fields and watching their cattle after the fashion of their forefathers, and dwelling either in scattered homesteads or in little villages, whose houses were placed together for mutual protection, and surrounded by a quickset hedge. Land held by individuals was called *folkland*, when the title to its possession depended upon witness of the people and common fame. It was called *bookland* when the owner's claim to it was based upon a written document, a book or charter. Most free Englishmen held land of their own. But when harvest was over all the villagers had the right to feed their flock upon their neighbours' fields as well as their own; and there were wide *commons* and wastes which belonged to the community as a whole. The chief products of the soil were corn and grass, and custom prescribed a regular rotation of crops, which no husbandman dreamt of departing from. The land was ploughed by rude heavy ploughs drawn by teams of oxen, and every year a half or a third of the arable soil lay fallow. The richest and most thickly inhabited part of the country was the south-east, where the open downs afforded rich pasture for sheep, and the forests provided plentiful store of acorns and beechmast to fatten swine. But the whole land was scantily peopled, and England contained less than two million inhabitants. The rude system of agriculture with the wasteful fallows yielded a scanty return to the farmer's labour.

Agriculture
and land
tenure
before the
Norman
conquest.

Moreover, communications were so difficult that a bad harvest in a district meant famine to its inhabitants, even if there were plenty a few shires off. Each farmer grew enough to support his own household, and was independent of fairs and markets, except for a few luxuries.

2. The nobles possessed great influence, and held great tracts of land scattered over the country, which were cultivated by their serfs and dependants. The most important of the nobles were called the king's *thegns*, or servants. The service of the crown was thought in itself to ennoble; the king's *thegns* received grants of land from their master, and were bound to fight his battles for him. They attended his councils, helped him in the government, and often became so powerful that they were a source of trouble and danger to him. In later Anglo-Saxon times the nobles became increasingly important. In many cases the smaller freemen, or *ceorls*, found it hard to make their living, and had a difficulty in resisting the greediness of the great landlords, who wished to make them their dependants. Many surrendered their estates to a neighbouring noble, and took them back to be held of him in return for protection. This was particularly the case in Wessex and the south. In Northumbria and the Danelaw there was still a large class of small free landholders up to the days of the Norman conquest. But even there the great nobles had the preponderating influence. Men who did not possess land were compelled to choose a lord to be answerable for them in the law courts. The lowest class of the community were bond-slaves, called *theows*. These were bought and sold in the markets like cattle. Poor men sometimes sold themselves in order to avoid starvation, and others became slaves of those to whom they owed money. There was a brisk slave trade, especially from Ireland, and slaves were perhaps the most important article of merchandise.

3. There was little trade and towns were few. The English were not strenuous enough to make great gains by commerce, and the self-sufficing life of each family made it unnecessary to go often to market. The result of this was that most of the towns were more important as fortresses than as commercial centres. Surrounded by a ditch and earth-works, and fenced about with timber stockades, they were more defensible than the houses of the nobles scattered over the country, or than the ordinary village packed thickly together behind its quickset hedge. Stone walls were almost unknown even for towns, and stone houses were also very rare. Most of the people dwelling

within the towns' earthen ramparts were farmers living on the land, who huddled together for protection from Danes, robbers, and turbulent nobles. Some of the greater towns were on Roman sites, like London, Chester, York, or Lincoln. Others became important as chief residences of kings, such as Tamworth, the royal city of the Mercians, Canterbury, the home of the kings of Kent, and Winchester, the favourite abode of the West Saxon royal house. Others grew up round famous churches and monasteries, such as Peterborough or Lichfield. But it was characteristic of the old English dislike of town life that most of the bishops lived not in the chief towns, but in country places that owed their whole importance to their being the bishop's residence. In France and Italy every important town had its bishop as a matter of course. Some towns united these various elements, as, for example, York, a Roman city, a strong fortress, the sometime residence of Northumbrian kings, and the seat of the northern archbishopric. London was by far the most important commercial town. It had been so in Roman days, and was so again by the time that the English became Christians. Desolated by the Danes, Alfred again filled it with inhabitants. Edward the Confessor preferred it to Winchester, and the royal palace that grew up hard by the great abbey of Westminster made it in Norman times the seat of government as well as a great commercial centre. When London submitted to William the Norman, the whole country accepted him as its king.

4. Even the houses of the wealthy were made of wood, and so roughly put together that hangings of tapestry were necessary to keep out draughts. Glazed windows were almost unknown, and when the openings in the walls were closed with wooden shutters the interiors must have been dark and depressing. The chief feature of a nobleman's house was the great hall, where the lord and his dependants lived and feasted, and where the majority of the inmates slept on the ground. There were no chimneys. A big fire blazed in the middle of the floor, and the smoke found its way out through a hole in the roof. Yet there was plenty of good cheer, hard drinking, and coarse revelry, all of which men loved even more than fighting. The nobles amused themselves with hunting and hawking; and when indoors listened to songs and stories, watched jugglers and tumblers, guessed riddles, and played chess. The chief luxuries were foreign silk, linen cloth, quaint jewellery, and jugs and vessels made of silver

Houses.

Food and
drink.

and glass. These latter were so curiously fashioned that they would not stand upright, so that the reveller had to empty his cup before he could set it down. The chief sweetmeat was honey, for sugar and spices were rare, and costly foreign luxuries. The women were engaged in spinning, weaving, and embroidery. Most clothing was made of woollen cloth, which the women spun and wove from the fleeces of their own sheep. The people drank mead, made from fermented honey, and sweet thick beer, brewed from malt without hops. In the south some wine was made, and the rich used also wine imported from France. Food consisted chiefly of barley bread, oat cakes, and the flesh of oxen and swine. At the approach of winter most of the live-stock was killed, and the people lived on salt flesh until the spring allowed the grass to grow, and fattened the half-starved flocks and herds that had escaped the autumn slaughtering.

5. There were so few large rooms that meetings and councils commonly took place in the open air. Even the churches were small rude structures of wood. Stone churches were the exception, though some of them have come down to our own days. They were described as being built "after the Roman fashion." They were small in size, roughly finished, with round arches and narrow, round, or triangular-shaped windows. Some of the towers were elaborately ornamented with patterns marked out in stone. They were often used as fortresses and meeting-places as well as for worship. It was quite a revolution in English building when Edward the Confessor's Norman craftsmen erected Westminster Abbey on a scale almost as large as the present church, though much less lofty.

6. The laws of the old English were short and simple. Few new laws were passed, and kings like Alfred, who were famous as legislators, did little more than collect in a convenient form the traditional customs of the race. The greater part of the Anglo-Saxon codes is taken up with the elaborate enumeration of the money penalties which could atone for almost every offence. Even murder could be bought off by a payment in money. The price paid for a man's life was called his *wergild*. It varied according to the rank of the person slain. At one end of the scale was the wergild of the king and archbishop, and at the other that of the common freemen. The sum thus paid went to the kinsfolk of the murdered person. Very often, however, the kinsmen took the law into their own hands, and executed summary vengeance upon the manslayer.

7. The land was divided into shires, hundreds, and townships. The origin of the *shires* differed in various parts of the country. Some of them represent the lesser kingdoms which were gradually absorbed in larger ones as English unity grew. The shires. Kent, Sussex, Essex, Middlesex, and Surrey have still the boundaries of the little kingdoms from which they took their names. Yorkshire is a somewhat smaller Deira, with a new name taken from its chief town. Northumberland is what is left of Bernicia, after Lothian had been given to the Scots, and other districts put under the government of the bishop of Durham. East Anglia is represented by the two shires of Norfolk and Suffolk, names which indicate the division of the East Angles into a northern and a southern people. The West Saxon shires are different in origin. That kingdom became so large that some sort of subdivision of it was found necessary. By the ninth century most of the West Saxon shires had come into existence. They are sometimes said to represent the lands held by different tribes of the West Saxons. It is more likely that they owe their existence to divisions of the kingdom between different members of the royal family, who held sub-kingdoms under a chief king. Beyond Wessex, Cornwall represents the old kingdom of the West Welsh, which was absorbed in Wessex by the tenth century. The midland or Mercian shires are later in origin, and were artificial in character. Each of them (except Rutland) takes its name from the county town, and in nearly every case that town is, or was, the real centre of the life of the district. They were probably created at the time of the conquest of Mercia and the Danelaw by Alfred and his successors. Some of the east midland shires may be Danish in origin.

8. The shire was divided into smaller districts, called *hundreds*, except in the Danelaw, where they are generally called *Wapentakes*. They vary very much in size in various parts of the country; those in the south being, as a rule, smaller Hundreds and townships. and therefore more numerous than those of the north. Each hundred in its turn consisted of a number of *townships*, or villages.

9. Both shires and hundreds each had a *moot*, or court, of their own. Both *shire moot* and *hundred moot* were attended by four men and the reeve, or chief officer of every town-ship within it. Besides these, the thegns, landholders, Law courts. and other persons of importance had the right to be present. Lawsuits were dealt with first by the hundred, and afterwards

by the shire. The method of trial was very rigid and formal. Everything depended on the suitors saying the right word or doing the right thing at the proper moment. If a man were accused of a crime he answered it by producing *compurgators*—that is, persons of good character, who, knowing the person and the district, took oath that in their opinion he was guiltless of the offence. Another way of clearing an accused person was by the *ordeal*, or appeal to the judgment of God. The suspected criminal grasped hot iron or was thrown into water. It was believed that if he were innocent a miracle would be wrought; the iron would not burn or the water drown. The whole body of suitors and members formed the judges, so that justice must have been of a very rough-and-ready sort. Besides these local popular courts, kings and great lords also had courts of their own, where they exercised jurisdiction over their dependants and servants. As time went on many nobles received special grants of jurisdiction over their lands, which had the effect of removing their tenants from the sphere of the hundred court altogether. But the shire court always remained of great importance. It was not only a court of justice, it was also the means of governing the country, and those attending it took advantage of its periodic meetings to transact all sorts of business with their neighbours. Its activity kept vigorous the local life, but also made it more difficult to induce the men of various shires to work together for the general profit of the nation.

10. The king was the head of the people, and surrounded by every form of respect. His chief officers were the *aldermen*, called, from Cnut's time onward, the *earls*. An earl or

The king's
officers. alderman seems to have been set over every shire.

But it became customary to assign several shires to the same alderman, and this habit received a further extension in Cnut's great earldoms, which in practice revived the old kingdoms under a new name. The earls thus became such dignified persons that they could not spend their time going round to the various shires and holding shire moots. A new officer, called the shire reeve, or *sheriff*, seems to have been created as the earls withdrew from the administration of their shires. By the Norman period the working head of the shire was the sheriff and not the earl. But the earl continued the natural commander of the *fyrð*, or military levy of the shire. This consisted of all the landowners, who were bound to provide themselves with arms and serve the king in the defence of the country.

11. The administrative machinery was very simple. The local courts and the great landlords had to see that the law was observed. If a landholder broke the law, his land could be seized *frithborh* as a pledge of his making amends. The lords were and responsible for landless men and others who had *tithings*. become their subjects. Moreover, the whole nation was divided into *frithborhs*, or *tithings*—that is, into groups of ten men, who were mutually made responsible for each other's doings, and compelled to pay the fines of their erring associates. Yet the land was full of disorder; outlaws and robbers lurked in every moor and forest, and increasing difficulty was found in making the nobles obey the king.

12. The central power was vested in the king. He had a small revenue, and, until Cnut's house-carrles, no standing force of soldiers at his disposal. Yet if he were a strong man he could generally enforce his will. If he were weak, every The king. great man took the law into his own hands, and the country was plunged into confusion. There was no popular council of the nation to correspond with the local moots. But a gathering of magnates met together at the chief festivals of the Church, and gave the king their advice. This body was called the *Witenagemot*—that is to say, the *Council of the Wise Men*. It included all the earls, archbishops, bishops, the chief abbots, and sometimes Welsh kings and other subject The Witenagemot. princes. Besides these the *Æthelings*, or near kinsmen of the king, sat in it, as also a number of king's thegns. These latter, who were more dependent on the king, were generally numerous enough to outvote the official leaders of Church and State. The *Witenagemot* assented to the passing of new laws, ratified royal grants of public lands, elected the kings, and discharged the general functions of a great council of the nation. We have no evidence, however, that it acted as a real check on the monarch. If the ruler were strong, he could have his own way; if he were weak, the different members each took their own course. The *Witan* were useless in moments of trouble to the kingdom.

13. The Church held a great position, but after the days of Dunstan it was afflicted with the same deadness that had gradually seized upon the State. The bishops were very great and powerful personages; but there were so few men The Church. fit for high rank in the Church that the custom grew up of giving more than one bishopric to the same individual. The chief ecclesiastics of the eleventh century were politicians rather than teachers

of the people. They advised the king in the Witenagemot, sat with earl and sheriff in the shire moot, and took a leading share in the government of the country. The monasteries became increasingly stagnant. Great movements profoundly influenced the Church on the continent, but the English Church was quite indifferent to them. Like the English State, it stood apart from the rest of the world. Though the pope was treated with great respect, and every archbishop went to Rome to receive from his hands the *pallium*, a stole that marked the dignity of the archiepiscopal office, there was no country in Europe where the Roman Church had less real power, or took less part in the daily life of the local churches. Thus the Anglo-Saxon Church corresponded in its sluggishness, as in its independence, to the Anglo-Saxon State.

14. Language and literature reflect the same characteristics. Though Latin was the tongue of the Church and of most learned books, the old English language had a greater place in letters than had the vernacular speech of the continent. We have seen how Alfred busied himself with translating books from Latin into English. The *English Chronicle*, which the same great king began, was still kept up in various monasteries, and stands quite by itself as a contemporary history written in the speech of the country. The noble songs it contains, as, for example, that of Brunanburh, show that the poetic spirit had not yet left the English people. But the great age of Anglo-Saxon poetry was over. Homilies, translations of Scripture, lives of saints, collections of medical prescriptions and lists of leading plants, now formed the bulk of the literary output. Alfred himself complained that whereas foreigners had of old come to Britain to get learning from the English, the English had now to get their knowledge abroad, if knowledge they would have at all. The language was rapidly changing. Not only did many new words come in with the Danes, but the English tongue was throwing off its old inflections, and becoming more like modern English. In letters, as in so many other ways, Anglo-Saxon England had worn itself out. The new blood brought in by the Danes did not do very much to restore it. It needed the stern discipline of the Norman conquest to restore the vitality of the sluggish race, and direct England into new channels of progress.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR THE FURTHER STUDY OF BOOK I

For Prehistoric Britain, W. Boyd Dawkins' *Early Man in Britain* and B. C. A. Windle's *Remains of the Prehistoric Age in England*. For Celtic

Britain, J. Rhys' *Celtic Britain*, and J. E. Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. i.; for the Celtic Church, H. Zimmer's *Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, translated by A. Meyer, E. J. Newell's *History of the Welsh Church*, and J. Dowden's *Celtic Church in Scotland*. For Roman Britain, Haverfield's *Romanization of Roman Britain*, and *Military Aspects of Roman Wales*, Mommsen's *Roman History*, vol. v. ch. v., translated by Deliscu. For Early English history a brilliant but somewhat imaginative account is contained in J. R. Green's *Making of England and Conquest of England*. For institutions, W. Stubbs' *Constitutional History of England*, vol. i. chaps. i.-ix, corrected by C. Petit-Dutailli; *Studies Supplementary to Stubbs' Constitutional History*, i. i.-v. (translated from the French). For social and economic history, *Social England*, by various writers, vol. i., especially the illustrated edition; and W. Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce during the Early and Middle Ages*, pp. 1-128. For the whole period, the *Political History of England*, edited by W. Hunt and R. L. Poole, vol. i. (to 1066) by T. Hodgkin. For historical geography see maps xv. (Roman Britain) and xvi. (England before the Norman Conquest) in the *Oxford Historical Atlas*, and for all periods Gardner's *School Atlas of English History*. For Scottish history, see Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, and P. Hume Brown's *History of Scotland*, vol. i., the latter more recent, but on a much smaller scale.

BOOK II

THE NORMAN AND ANGEVIN KINGS

CHAPTER I

WILLIAM I. THE CONQUEROR (1066-1087)

Chief Dates:

- 1066. Accession of William I.
- 1067-1070. English revolts.
- 1071. Hereward subdued.
- 1075. Revolts of Earls Ralph and Roger.
- 1079. Battle of Gerberoy.
- 1086. Domesday Book.
- 1087. Death of William I.

1. THE coronation of William was succeeded by a few months of peace so profound that it looked as if England had been completely subdued, and that the king would have no more trouble with his new subjects than Cnut had had. William gave himself out as the lawful successor of Edward the Confessor. Those who had fought for the usurper Harold were traitors, and had forfeited their lands for their treason. It was natural that William should hand over their estates to his Norman followers. But Englishmen who had not been in arms against him were allowed to continue in their possessions, and nearly all the old officers in Church and State were kept on. Edwin and Morcar still governed the midlands and north. The king brought in no new laws, upheld the old courts, and promised to rule as Edgar and Cnut had governed.

2. Despite William's fair words and acts, the English soon found that he had very different ideas as to how a king should govern his country from those of any of his predecessors. In particular, he was not likely to follow the example of Edward the Confessor, and be content with a nominal superiority over earls like Edwin and Morcar.

Bitter experience in Normandy had taught him to distrust the great nobles, and he had also to satisfy the swarm of Norman adventurers who had helped him, and who were by no means content with the small reward meted out to them after Hastings. Before long nothing but the fierce will of the king kept the English nobles from rebelling, or his Norman followers from robbing the conquered people of their lands and offices. In 1067, however, William was forced to revisit Normandy. He left the government in the hands of his half-brother, Bishop Odo of Bayeux, and of William Fitzosbern, a great Norman noble. These men began to oppress the English terribly, and encourage the greedy Normans to seize their lands and build castles upon them. Only the south had really felt the weight of the Norman power. The lands north of the Thames had submitted, and had not been conquered. They at once rose in revolt against the misdeeds of William's regents. The king came back from Normandy and discovered that his conquest of England had only been begun at Hastings. For the next five years he was busily engaged in putting down rebellions, and subduing England piece by piece. It was not till 1071 that the process was completed.

3. All through these years the English were constantly in revolt. They fought bravely; but their leaders were incompetent, and were always quarrelling with each other. Moreover, the completion of different parts of the country did not work together. One district rebelled and was subdued, and then the next region rose in rebellion. It was, therefore, 1067-1071, possible for the Normans to put down piecemeal these piecemeal rebellions. Had the English shown as much union as their enemies, they might well have avenged the death of Harold. As it was, whenever the Normans conquered a district, they erected in it a castle, whose garrison kept down the English in obedience. Even if another revolt broke out, the Normans could take refuge behind the walls of the castle until the king was able to come up and release them. The English, unaccustomed to fortresses, had few means of capturing these new strongholds. Before long the whole land was covered with Norman castles.

4. The extremities of the country, the north and the west, were the most difficult to conquer. The men of the south-western shires rose in rebellion in 1068, and called in the sons of Harold, who had taken refuge in Ireland, to help of the West them. But before the end of the year the king captured Exeter, and put down the western revolt for good. William had harder work in the north; but even here the divisions of the

enemy greatly helped his progress. Edwin and Morcar more than once headed a revolt. But they were not strong or resolute enough to prove successful leaders, and were divided between their anxiety not to compromise themselves fatally with William, and their conviction that William's supremacy meant the loss of the great position so long enjoyed by the house of Leofric. After a half-hearted attempt they made their submission to William, who treated them with remarkable leniency. Nor was the north country more fortunate when Edgar the Ætheling appeared among them, and they chose him as their king. Edgar had, however, one powerful backer in his brother-in-law, Malcolm Canmore (or Big Head), the most powerful king the Scots had yet had; and the Northumbrians expected much from him in their struggles against William. The Danes, however, were also called upon to help them, and Malcolm was so jealous of the Danes that he gave the rebels little help. A Danish fleet appeared in the Humber, and lent its powerful aid to the English. The Danes joined with the best of the northern rebels, Waltheof, earl of Huntingdon, and son of Siward, the sometime earl of Northumbria. But after William came up, the Danes withdrew to their ships, and Waltheof made his submission. William treated him with marked favour, and reinstated him in his earldom. But the king wreaked a terrible revenge on the rebel country. He laid waste the whole land from the Humber to the Tees. Many years afterwards all Yorkshire still lay desolate and untilled. It was an awful example of the ruthlessness of William, and effectually stopped future rebellion in the north country.

5. In 1070 the last English revolt against William broke out in the district bordering on the Wash. Driven out of the open country, the rebels took refuge in the Isle of Ely, a subdued, real island in those days, and surrounded on every side by a wilderness of fen and morass. At the head of this gallant band was a Lincolnshire thegn, named Hereward, whose wonderful deeds of daring made him the hero of the English. Among others who joined him were Edwin and Morcar, who had learned too late that their hesitating policy was of no avail against the power of William. For long the Ely fugitives defied the power of William; but at last the king made his way to their camp of refuge by building a hard causeway over his fens, so that his soldiers could attack Hereward's position. In 1071 Ely was captured. Hereward reconciled himself to William, and was kindly treated by him. So faithful was he henceforth that

money which William required him to contribute to the expenses of his campaigns. He irritated William by sending to a Welsh war a contingent of soldiers which the king thought too small in numbers, and too ill-equipped for the work. When the king appealed to his own court to settle this dispute, Anselm declared that the matter must be referred to the pope. In 1097, upon this appeal, he withdrew to Rome, and William at once laid violent hands upon his estates. The archbishop remained in exile for the rest of the reign. Alone of the king's subjects, he had dared to resist his will.

11. The dispute between Church and State did little to check the prosperous course of the king's affairs. Master of England, Rufus threatened the independence of Scotland and Wales even more signally than his father had done. In 1092 he conquered Cumberland, which had hitherto been an independent state, tracing back its origin to the old kingdom of the Strathclyde Welsh. Cumberland was made a new English county, and Carlisle, now an English city, became in the next reign the seat of a new bishopric. In 1093 there was war between William and Malcolm Canmore. Malcolm invaded England, but lost his life at Alnwick. His reign is of the greatest importance in Scottish history. The rude Highland chieftain had been tamed into civilized ways by his saintly wife Margaret, the sister of Edgar the Ætheling. Through Margaret's influence English fashions of life were spread throughout the Celtic kingdom. Her influence lived on during the reigns of her sons, and as Scotland became more English, it was inclined to be more friendly with the English kings.

12. Even more notable was the advance of the English power in Wales, though here it was brought about after a different fashion. The Welsh princes remained as fiercely Celtic as before, and William himself did not manage to subdue the stronger of them in any real fashion. But many Norman adventurers, debarred by Rufus's strong hand from ruling England as they wished, swarmed over the boundary-line, and, fighting for their own hands, carved out with their swords new lordships for themselves at the expense of the Welsh. Soon all eastern and southern Wales was overrun by Norman barons, who set up castles to hold the lands they had conquered. Thus arose what was afterwards called the *lordships marcher*, or border lordships of Wales. These were small feudal states, ruled almost independently by great Norman families, and owing little but bare

Anselm
driven into
exile, 1097.

Conquest of
Cumberland
and death of
Malcolm
Canmore.

The Norman
conquest of
South Wales.

allegiance to the English king, who permitted their establishment because it was a cheap way of occupying his restless barons and keeping the Welsh in check. Prominent among these feudal states were the palatine earldom of Pembroke, the lordships of Glamorgan, Brecon, and Montgomery. Only amidst the hills of Snowdon did the Welsh succeed in maintaining their independence.

13. The separation of England and Normandy hardly lessened William's importance in continental affairs. Robert's weakness made his government of Normandy a sorry failure. Rufus and Normandy. He was soon in such dire distress for money that he sold the Cotentin and the Avranchin, the western districts round the towns of Coutances and Avranches, to Henry, the youngest and wisest of the Conqueror's sons. When William in his turn invaded Normandy, Robert bought off his hostility by yielding to him also a large tract of territory in the east. Maine revolted from Robert, and once more was ruled by her own line of counts. Sometimes William and Robert acted together. They grew jealous of Henry's power in the Cotentin, and united for a moment to drive him out. Before long, however, the prudent Henry found his way back again.

14. In 1095 Urban II. urged all Europe to join in a holy war to rescue the sepulchre of Christ and the other holy places in Palestine from the yoke of the Mohammedans. The First Crusade, Palestine had been ruled by the Mohammedans for 1095. many centuries, but so long as its masters were the Arabs, Christian pilgrims were still permitted to visit the spots consecrated by Christ's presence. Recently, however, the Turks, a fierce race of barbarians from central Asia, had made themselves the greatest power in the Mohammedan world, and had taken possession of Syria. Their fanaticism put all sorts of difficulties in the way of the pilgrims, and their complaints at last moved the pope to take up their cause. He promised the favour of the Church and all sorts of spiritual privileges to all who would join in the holy war. Those who agreed to go wore a cross sewn upon their garments, and the holy war was called a *Crusade*. It was just the sort of enterprise to appeal to a time when the warrior and the monk represented the two types of life that were most generally esteemed. All Europe sent its chivalry to fight against the infidel at the command of the pope. The *First Crusade*, as it was called, was a wonderful success. The Turks were expelled from the Holy Land, and Godfrey of Boulogne was established in 1099 as Christian king in Jerusalem.

15. Robert of Normandy was anxious to go on crusade, but he had no money to equip himself or his followers for the expedition. In 1095 William advanced him a sufficient sum, and Robert handed over to him Normandy as a pledge that he would repay it. This prudent bargain allowed Robert to win glory in Palestine while William ruled Normandy. Among Robert's companions in the holy war was Edgar the Ætheling. Meanwhile William's stern government soon restored order in Normandy. He won back Le Mans, and went to war against France. His success enhanced his reputation, and, to the alarm of the French king, Duke William of Aquitaine, anxious like Robert, to go on crusade, offered to pledge his great duchy to him in return for the necessary funds. Visions of a power in France extending from the Channel to the Pyrenees floated before William's eyes; but before he could take any steps to realize his dreams he was suddenly cut off. On August 2, 1100, he went to hunt in the New Forest. There an arrow drawn by an unknown hand pierced him to the heart. The courtiers scattered, and next day some foresters bore the corpse to Winchester on a cart, and it was laid, without service or ceremony, in a tomb in the minster. A stone, called *Rufus's stone*, marks the place where the tyrant was traditionally said to have met his death. William, says the English chronicler, "was loathsome to all his people and abominable to God, as his end shewed, for he departed in the midst of his unrighteousness without repentance or atonement."

William
gains Nor-
mandy and
dies.



THE NEW FOREST

CHAPTER III

HENRY I. (1100-1135)

Chief dates:

- 1100. Accession of Henry I.
- 1102. Fall of Robert of Bellême.
- 1106. Battle of Tinchebray.
- 1107. Reconciliation of Henry and Anselm
- 1120. Loss of the *White Ship*.
- 1135. Death of Henry I.

1. HENRY, the dead king's younger brother, was a member of the hunting party in which Rufus met his fate. Without a moment's delay, he hurried to Winchester, secured the royal treasure, and procured his election as king by the handful of magnates who happened to be there. Thence he hastened with all speed to London, where, on August 5, the fourth day after the New Forest tragedy, he was crowned as king.

2. Immediately after his coronation, Henry issued a *Charter of Liberties*, wherein he sought to win the favour of every class by promising to reign after a better fashion than his brother. To the Church, suffering from Rufus's constant encroachments on her liberties, he promised freedom of election to all bishoprics and abbeys, and declared that henceforth he would not sell or favour the revenues of vacant sees. To the barons he announced that he would not insist on the unreasonable reliefs, excessive marriage fines, oppressive wardships, and other exactions of his brother's days. To the nation at large he offered the abrogation of "all the evil customs whereby the realm has unjustly been oppressed," and the renewed enjoyment of the laws of Edward the Confessor. He stipulated that he would take care that his barons gave the same concessions to their tenants as he himself had given to his tenants in chief. Only in respect to the forests would Henry yield nothing. Besides issuing this charter, Henry imprisoned Ranulf Flambard in the Tower of London, wrote at once to Anselm to urge him to return

to England, and married Edith, daughter of Malcolm Canmore and St. Margaret, and sister to Edgar, the reigning king of Scots. In all these acts Henry posed as the friend of the English and the foe of the feudal baronage. His marriage with a descendant of the West Saxon kings was particularly popular, though to please the Normans he changed the lady's name to Matilda, or Maud, the name of his mother. She soon became loved as the good Queen Maud. But the Normans sneered at Henry's affectation of English ways, and derided him and his wife by nicknaming them Godric and Godiva.

3. Within a few weeks of his brother's accession, Robert of Normandy came back from the Holy Land, having won great glory by his exploits as a crusader. He resumed the government of Normandy, which again fell into the disorder which it needed a strong hand like that of Henry to check. Ranulf Flambard escaped from the Tower, and told Robert that the Norman barons were eager to put him on the English throne in place of Henry. Accordingly, in 1101, Robert collected an army and landed at Portsmouth in quest of his brother's crown. But the English rallied around their king, and Anselm, now back in England, marshalled all the forces of the Church on the same side. Robert saw that the good will of the barons availed him nothing against such odds. He was the last man in the world to persevere in a hopeless enterprise. He gladly accepted Henry's proposal to hold a personal interview. When they met the brothers made friends. Robert agreed to yield up his claim on England on consideration of Henry giving him a pension, and surrendering to him his lands in the Cotentin.

Failure of
Robert's
revolt.
1101.

4. Abandoned by Robert, the Norman barons in England were now exposed to the wrath of King Henry. The fiercest, strongest, cruellest of them was Robert of Bellême, who added to vast dominions in Normandy the lordships of Arundel and Chichester in Sussex, and the palatine earldom of Shrewsbury on the Welsh border. A mighty warrior, Robert had been one of the foremost of the Norman conquerors of Wales, and nearly all Mid Wales and much of South Wales was ruled by him and his brothers. In 1102 Henry picked a quarrel with him, and Robert had to defend himself. But his tyranny had made him odious to all; the Welsh and English refused to fight for him, and the weak Duke Robert was easily persuaded by Henry to attack his possessions beyond sea. The king made himself master of Arundel and other castles of his

The fall of
Robert of
Bellême,
1102.

enemy. Robert of Bellême strove to defend himself in his Shropshire estates. But Henry besieged the mighty new castle which Robert had erected at Bridgnorth, on the Severn, and the townsmen compelled the garrison to surrender. Driven to a last refuge at Shrewsbury, the lord of Bellême was forced to make his submission. He was allowed to leave England for Normandy, but all his English lands were forfeited to the crown. Henry put an end to the palatine earldom of Shrewsbury, as the Conqueror had put an end to the palatine earldom of Hereford. The English were overjoyed at the fall of the tyrant. "Rejoice, King Henry," ran a popular song that they sung, "and give thanks to the Lord God, for thou hast begun to reign freely now that thou hast conquered Robert of Bellême, and hast driven him from the boundaries of thy kingdom." Henceforth the feudal nobles were cowed, and Henry, having had good reason to distrust them, now gave his confidence to knights and clerks of lower birth, but of greater fidelity. Some of his ministers were even men of English origin.

5. Henry was soon able to turn the tables on his brother. Robert found Normandy was gradually slipping away from him.

Battle of Tincebray, 1106. Robert of Bellême, now limited to his Norman estates, deprived him of many great tracts of territory. In 1106.

two successive expeditions Henry conquered much of Normandy for himself. At last, in 1106, Henry made a final invasion of such of his brother's inheritance as still remained faithful to him. The decisive battle was fought at Tincebray, where Robert lost both his dominions and his liberty. For the rest of his life he was kept in kindly custody in his brother's English castles, and died at Cardiff nearly thirty years later. His comrade on the crusade, Edgar the Ætheling, and Robert of Bellême, were also taken prisoners at Tincebray. Henry released them both from custody; but while Edgar lived for the rest of his life in obscurity in England, Bellême plunged into fresh revolts that involved him in lifelong captivity. Henceforth Henry ruled Normandy as well as England, and the duchy, like the kingdom, was reduced to good order.

6. Anselm had loyally helped Henry against the barons, yet from the moment of his return a grave question of principle involved a long dispute between the king and the archbishop. During his exile, Anselm had taken an active part in the famous Investiture Contest which was still raging between the pope and the emperor. He had attended a council in which prelates had been forbidden

The Investiture Contest in England, 1103-1107.

to receive investiture from laymen, or even to perform homage to them. Hitherto English bishops, including Anselm himself, had received investiture from the king and done homage to him without a scruple. Now Anselm refused to renew his homage to the new king, and declared that he could not countenance any bishops following the ancient custom. The dispute was carried on in a good-tempered way, and, though Henry and Anselm were quite firm on the matter of principle, neither party lost his respect for the other. At last, in 1103, Anselm withdrew from England to lay his difficulties before Pope Paschal II., at Rome. The archbishop remained in exile until 1107. Then a satisfactory compromise was arranged, by which he was allowed to return. Henry yielded one of the points at issue, but Anselm surrendered on the other. The king utterly renounced lay investitures, while the archbishop withdrew his objection to clerks performing homage to the king. Henry's change of front was intelligible, since lay investitures were hard to defend upon the principles which all men then accepted, for the ring and the staff were admittedly symbols of spiritual dignity, and no lay prince had any authority to confer spiritual jurisdiction. But Henry regarded investiture as the means by which he asserted his authority as king over the prelates of his realm. Anselm, by giving up his point about homage, enabled the king to maintain his hold over the higher clergy in a way less offensive to their scruples. Henceforth, in return for the abandonment of investitures, it was arranged that no bishop was to be consecrated or abbot enthroned until he had rendered homage to the king for his temporal possessions. Seemingly, the compromise was in favour of the Church, for Henry had given up lay investitures. But Henry might well maintain that he had surrendered the shadow and retained the substance. How far the compromise would work depended upon the good sense and forbearance of future kings and prelates. But it gave peace for the time, and was so far looked upon as satisfactory that, more than fifteen years later, the original conflict between pope and emperor was ended upon the lines of the agreement of Henry and Anselm by the *Concordat of Worms*. But the dispute, which in England was amicably settled after five years of negotiations, had plunged all Germany and Italy into confusion for nearly fifty years.

7. Master of Church and State alike, absolute lord of England and Normandy, Henry's power exceeded that of his brother and father. Scotland, ruled by the queen's brothers and nephew, was friendly and submissive, and so close were the relations of

the two courts that pushing Norman adventurers began to insinuate themselves into the good will of the Scottish kings, and to

Extension of Norman influence over Scotland. receive so many lands and favours from them that the Scottish nobility became ultimately almost as Norman as the baronage of England. After 1124 the king of Scots was David, Matilda's brother, who

had passed his youth at his sister's court, and as the husband of Waltheof's heiress, received Waltheof's old earldom of Huntingdon. David was even more thoroughly normanized than his father, Malcolm, had been anglicized. He had no scruple in frequently attending King Henry's court, or in performing homage to him. Norman ideals of warfare, law, government, and social life spread from his example over all northern Britain. In this indirect way a sort of Norman conquest of Scotland was gradually brought about; but it was due, not to violence, but to the peaceful permeation of Norman influence.

8. During the same years the more forcible Norman conquest of Wales which began under Rufus was completed, save that the

Completion of the Norman conquest of South Wales. Welsh princes of Gwynedd, or North Wales—they no longer were called kings—held their own amidst the hills of Snowdon, where Henry was powerless to dislodge them. In the conquests of the marchers, Henry had little interest, for after the fall of Robert of

Bellême none of them were strong enough to threaten his power. Yet it was with his good will that Flemings were settled in the earldom of Pembroke, where their successors became so numerous that they drove out the Welsh speech from southern Pembrokeshire, and, adopting the English tongue, made that district the "Little England beyond Wales," which it still remains. Moreover, a prudent marriage secured to Henry's own family some of the chief spoils of conquest. The king married his favourite illegitimate son, whose name was Robert, to the daughter of Robert Fitzhamon,

Robert of Gloucester and Glamorgan. lord of Gloucester and conqueror of Glamorgan. Robert inherited his father-in-law's possessions which were erected by Henry into the earldom of Gloucester.

This earldom of Gloucester, always including the great marcher lordship of Glamorgan, was henceforth one of the greatest of English dignities. Robert himself was a famous warrior and man of ability. He loved literature, and particularly history, and showed such sympathy for the legends of his Welsh subjects, that it was at his direction that a Welsh clerk, named Geoffrey of Monmouth, wrote his *History of Britain*. This book made famous

CHAPTER IV

STEPHEN OF BLOIS (1135-1154)

Chief dates:

- 1135. Accession of Stephen.
- 1138. Battle of the Standard.
- 1141. Battle of Lincoln.
- 1153. Treaty of Wallingford.
- 1154. Death of Stephen.

1. AMONG the kinsfolk to whom Henry I. had given lands and power was his nephew, Stephen of Blois, a younger son of the powerful count of Blois, who ruled over the Loire country between Anjou and the domains directly governed by the French king. Stephen's mother was Adela, a daughter of William the Conqueror. Henry I. had shown marked favour to his sister's sons. He had procured Stephen's marriage to Matilda, heiress of the rich county of Boulogne, and had obtained the important bishopric of Winchester for his younger brother Henry. During his lifetime Stephen had been unswervingly faithful to his uncle, and had joined with the other barons in taking oaths to acknowledge his cousin, the Empress Matilda, as Henry's successor. But he knew how unpopular among the barons was the prospect of being ruled by a woman and an Angevin, and on Henry I.'s death made a bold and successful attempt upon his crown. He hurried to England, and was welcomed by most of the barons. The wealthy citizens of London showed him marked good will, and his brother, Bishop Henry of Winchester, used his powerful interest in his favour. Even the justiciar, Roger of Salisbury, forgot his pledges to his old master and declared for Stephen, and his action brought all the justices and officials of the old king to take the same side. Accordingly Stephen was chosen king, and crowned by the archbishop of Canterbury, William of Corbeil. Like Henry I., he issued a charter, and tried to win to his side all sorts of supporters. His first charter was a hasty affair, and couched in vague language. He soon supplemented it by a fuller one, in which he set

forth in detail the many liberties which he was willing to give to the Church. He promised to root out all injustice and extortion, Stephen's and pledged himself to uphold the good old laws and Charters of customs of the realm. Though keeping for his use Liberties. the forests as they were under the two Williams, he offered to relinquish the new ones created by Henry I.

2. At first Stephen seemed to have won complete recognition as king. The barons of Normandy, hating the rule of the Angevin and his wife, recognized him as their duke. It was to no purpose that some of the English baronage, seeing that he was carrying on the same policy as that of Henry I., rose in revolt against him. He was equally successful in dealing with David, King of Scots, who in 1138 invaded the northern counties as the champion of Matilda. Thurstan, the old archbishop of York, stung to indignation at the merciless raiding of the Scots, summoned the levies of the north to repel them. The English met the Scots at Northallerton.

Battle of the Standard, In the middle of their ranks was a cart, on which were placed the standard of the king and the banners of 1138. the three most famous Yorkshire saints. The English

fought on foot after the old fashion, but they broke the charge of King David's knights, and drove the Scots in disorder from the field. The fight was called *the Battle of the Standard*.

3. Stephen was a man of very different mould from Henry I. Like Robert of Normandy, he was a gallant soldier and a kind, Stephen's open-hearted, chivalrous gentleman. Yet a worse man quarrel with of greater firmness and policy would have proved a Roger of better king. If Stephen's earlier years remained Salisbury. peaceful, the merit was due not to the sovereign, but to Roger of Salisbury and the tried ministers of Henry I. Unluckily, Stephen grew to mistrust the justiciar, and became jealous of the great power which he and his kinsfolk were wielding. Besides Roger's own high offices in Church and State, his son was chancellor and two of his nephews were bishops of Ely and Lincoln. Fearing lest so mighty a family should encroach still further on the royal dignity, Stephen in 1138 called upon Roger and his nephews to surrender their castles. The result was a complete breach between the king and the powerful official class. Roger was driven from office, and no competent successor to him was found. Gradually the administrative system set up so laboriously under Henry began to grow weaker, and henceforth nothing prospered with Stephen.

4. Robert, earl of Gloucester, was a partisan of Matilda, but he

had been compelled to acknowledge Stephen after his father's death. Within a few weeks of Roger's disgrace he landed in England, accompanied by the empress, who now demanded Stephen's throne. Civil war at once broke out, and went on with hardly a break for the rest of Stephen's reign.

Beginnings
of civil
war.

5. Stephen strove to withstand Matilda with the help of Flemish mercenaries, hired with Henry I.'s gold. He never threw himself upon the people as Henry I. had done, and never obtained much support from them. Matilda was almost as badly off. Her only competent adviser was Robert of Gloucester, for the barons who professed to uphold her cause fought in reality for their own hands. Whichever side they championed, the barons had no wish for either Stephen or Matilda to win outright, but preferred that the civil war should go on as long as possible, so that they should make their profit from the weakness of both rivals. The result was that neither party was strong enough to defeat the other, and neither was able to control its followers or govern the territory which it held. The barons took advantage of the dispute to win for themselves the independent position which the first three Norman kings had denied them. England was plunged into indescribable anarchy and confusion, and the wretched peasantry suffered unspeakable misery.

The rivalry
of Stephen
and Matilda.

6. The English chronicler, who finally laid down his pen at the end of this reign, gives us a moving picture of the desolation of the country. "Every nobleman built a castle and held it against the king; and they filled the land with castles. When the castles were made, they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took all who had any property and put them in prison and tortured them to get their gold and silver. They taxed the villages, and when the wretched countrymen had no more to give them they burnt their villages. Then was corn dear, and meat and cheese, for there was none in the land. Men starved for hunger, and some that were once rich men went about begging their bread. They robbed churches and churchmen, and though the bishops and clergy were ever cursing them, they cared nothing for their curses. The land was all undone with their deeds, and men said that Christ and his saints slept." Another writer says that "there were as many kings, or rather tyrants, as there were lords of estates."

Desolation
of England.

7. A few greedy nobles profited by the necessities of the rival claimants to make their own profit out of both. Conspicuous

among these was Geoffrey of Mandeville, a cunning, strong, and cruel self-seeker, who, by joining first one side and then the other,

obtained from both grants of enormous estates and Geoffrey of his recognition as earl of Essex. At last he overreached Mandeville.

himself, and provoked Stephen to make a mighty effort to crush him. Geoffrey fled to the fens, the region once famed for the daring deeds of Hereward. He held his own there until he was slain in a chance skirmish. His power perished with him, but there were plenty of others to take his place, though none could play his daring game so cleverly or so successfully.

8. The course of the war between Stephen and Matilda had little effect on the country at large. Stephen's strongest partisans were the Londoners and the rich and populous shires of the south-east and south. Matilda's chief strongholds were Bristol and Gloucester, the main centres of the power of her brother, Earl Robert. The greater barons were largely on her side, among them

being Robert's son-in-law, Randolph, earl of Chester. **The Battle of Lincoln.** In 1141 Robert and Randolph strove to relieve 1141.

Lincoln, which Stephen was besieging. In a battle fought outside the town Stephen's army was overwhelmed and he himself taken prisoner. Many of the king's partisans fell away from him now that he was helpless. His own brother, Henry of Winchester, deserted him and declared to a council of barons, gathered in his cathedral city, that by the defeat of Lincoln God's judgment had been clearly shown to be against Stephen's claim to the throne. The barons then chose Matilda as their

queen, and she went to London to be crowned. But **Matilda's failure.** her cold and haughty manner disgusted her best friends, and the Londoners, who always wished well

to Stephen, rose in revolt and drove her from their city. A strong reaction in favour of Stephen broke out. Henry of Winchester again changed sides, and in a battle fought at Winchester, Robert of Gloucester was taken prisoner in his turn. Matilda now had to lead her own side as best she could, while Stephen's cause was ably upheld by his heroic wife Matilda of Boulogne. Before long, however, the two Matildas agreed to exchange Stephen and Robert for each other, and so the war went on as before. But the empress had lost her best chance, and in 1148 the death of her wise and strenuous brother ruined her last hopes. In despair she quitted England for Normandy, and Stephen henceforth reigned nominally as sole king. But the land remained in horrible confusion, and the broken-spirited monarch was far too weak to restore

order. Only in the northern counties, where David, king of Scots, was in possession, was there any approach to good government. The Welsh profited by England's anarchy to throw off the yoke of the marcher lords.

9. In 1153 Matilda's eldest son, Henry, landed in England to claim his mother's heritage. Though only twenty years old, he had made himself duke of Normandy. On his father's death he had succeeded to Anjou, and a prudent marriage with Eleanor, heiress of Poitou and Aquitaine, the divorced wife of Louis VII. of France, had secured him the overlordship of all France from the Loire to the Pyrenees. Carefully trained in war and statecraft by his uncles Robert and David, he proved himself a much more formidable enemy to Stephen than ever his mother had been. The king had no heart to struggle against his young rival, and the deaths of his high-souled queen and of his eldest son Eustace made him anxious to end his days in peace. Accordingly, he yielded to the advice of his wisest counsellors, and made terms with Henry by the treaty of Wallingford. By this it was arranged that Stephen was to go on reigning for the rest of his life, but that Henry was to succeed him to all his dominions. Henry remained in England for a time, and did his best to help his rival to pacify the kingdom.

10. Soon after Henry's return to Normandy, Stephen died. His reign is only important because it showed what the rule of the barons really meant. The cruelties of the Conqueror and his sons pale into nothingness as compared with the horrors wrought in the name of this well-meaning king. Stephen's failure showed how vital to England's prosperity was that strong and ruthless despotism which the Norman kings had set up. The power of the crown was proved to be necessary, since it was the only way of saving England from anarchy.

CHAPTER V

HENRY II. OF ANJOU (1154-1189)

Chief dates :

- 1154. Accession of Henry II.
- 1159. War of Toulouse.
- 1164. Constitutions of Clarendon.
- 1166. Assize of Clarendon.
- 1170. Murder of St. Thomas.
- 1171. Norman conquest of Ireland.
- 1174. Feudal revolt suppressed.
- 1181. Assize of Arms.
- 1184. Assize of the Forest.
- 1189. Death of Henry II.

1. ON Stephen's death Henry of Anjou became Henry II. according to the treaty of Wallingford. Under him the houses of Normandy and Anjou, hitherto rivals and enemies, became united.

Accession and character of Henry II., 1154. Moreover, through his grandmother, Matilda, queen of Henry I., Henry was descended from the old English line of kings. He was one of the ablest of all our monarchs, and no ruler has left a deeper impress on our history. He was a strong, restless man, who worked so hard that he would never sit down except at meals and at council meetings. He had little respect for tradition, and was fond of making experiments in government. A mighty warrior, he showed even more ability as a statesman and a lawyer. He was well educated, and amused himself with reading as well as with hunting. He took no pains to win popularity, and was indifferent to royal pomp. Generally shrewd and prudent, he was at times swayed by fierce bursts of passion which made him the terror of all around him.

2. Henry's first business was to put an end to the disorders of Stephen's reign and bring back England to the condition in which it was when Henry I. died. He sent The restoration of order. Stephen's Flemish mercenaries back to their workshops. He annulled his predecessor's lavish grants of land, and called upon the barons who had built castles without the king's

in the days of his grandfather. The bishops agreed to this "saving the rights of their order." Thereupon, Henry drew up in writing a list of these ancient customs which in January, 1164, was laid before a great council held at the king's hunting-lodge of Clarendon, near Salisbury. For this reason it was called the *Constitutions of Clarendon*.

6. The sixteen articles of the constitutions covered the whole ground of the relations of Church and State. They provided that clerks accused of crimes should be brought before the king's justices. If they could prove that they were clergymen they were to be sent to the Church courts to be tried; if convicted, the ecclesiastical court was to degrade them from their orders, and then they were to be brought back to the king's court and to receive, as laymen, a layman's punishment. The Church courts were to be carefully watched, and their jurisdiction limited to strictly ecclesiastical matters. Moreover, the rules which William the Conqueror had drawn up to determine doubtful points between Church and State were to be reasserted. The compromise arranged between Henry I. and Anselm was reaffirmed, and bishops were to hold their lands like other barons. Appeals to Rome were not to be made without the king's consent, and prelates were to be elected in the king's chapel under the king's eye.

The Con-
stitutions of
Clarendon,
1164.

7. After a momentary acquiescence, Thomas refused to accept the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, declaring them to be against the liberties of the Church. Henry was moved to deep indignation, and resolved to ruin him. Courtiers were encouraged to bring lawsuits against him, and Henry called upon him to give an account of the money which he had received when he was chancellor. The king's violence gave Thomas a better argument than he had previously had for rejecting the constitutions. If the king's courts could be made the instrument for ruining the king's enemies, it was not unreasonable that the Church should strive to protect her clergy from such unrighteous bodies. As in the days of Anselm, most of the bishops were on the king's side, and begged Thomas to submit. In the Council of Northampton, October, 1164, the archbishop met Henry face to face and refused to surrender. The justiciar declared Thomas a traitor, whereupon the archbishop appealed to the pope and withdrew. A few days later he sailed in disguise to France. The angry king banished all his kinsfolk from England.

Thomas
leaves
England.

8. For six years Thomas remained abroad and carried on

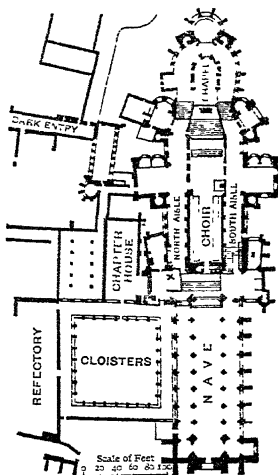
a violent controversy with the king. He was disgusted to find that the pope, Alexander III., gave him only a lukewarm support.

Thomas's return to England, 1170. Alexander himself was engaged at the moment in a great quarrel with the powerful Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who had driven him from Italy to France.

In his distress the pope was anxious not to break utterly with so mighty a prince as Henry, and did what he could to smooth matters over. Henry, on his part, was desirous of avoiding a breach with the pope. Gradually he became more reasonable, and after years of exile even Thomas was less stiff in his attitude. At last, in 1170, a vague agreement was patched up. Henry and Thomas met in France; they said not a word about the Constitutions of Clarendon, but the king promised to restore the archbishop and his friends, and to be guided by his counsel in future. On December 1, 1170, Thomas returned to England and took up his abode at Canterbury. During the negotiations for his restitution fresh causes of difficulty had arisen. The king's eldest son, Henry, was now a young man, and the king, following a custom usual in France, resolved to have him crowned during his own lifetime, so that the prince might learn the business of kingcraft under his father's eye, and share with him the heavy task of governing his vast dominions. The younger Henry's coronation took place on Whit Sunday, 1170. To crown the king was one of the most cherished rights of the archbishop of Canterbury, but, as Thomas was still abroad, Roger, archbishop of York, a close supporter of the king, had performed the ceremony. Thomas bitterly complained of this as a violation of the privileges of Canterbury, and excommunicated Archbishop Roger and all the bishops who took part in the ceremony. Matters stood thus when Thomas returned to England. It is strange that Henry should have omitted to make terms with Thomas in this matter, but he probably thought that their agreement to let bygones be bygones included the question of the coronation as well as the Constitutions of Clarendon. He was at once disappointed in this hope. No sooner was Thomas established at Canterbury than he renewed the excommunication of the offending prelates.

9. Henry was moved to a characteristic outburst of temper when he learned that the archbishop's return meant a new quarrel. "What fools and dastards have I nourished in my house," he cried, "that not one of them will avenge me on one upstart clerk?" Four knights took Henry at his word, and rode straightway to Canterbury,

which they reached on December 29. They made their way to the archbishop's chamber and bade him forthwith obey the king's order and absolve the excommunicated bishops. Thomas declared that he was only obeying the pope, and gave the knights no satisfaction. They left him in a rage, and the archbishop went into the cathedral, where the terrified monks were singing vespers. Meanwhile the knights put on their armour and, accompanied by a band of soldiers, followed Thomas into the church. The archbishop's attendants would have closed the door which led from the cloister into the north transept. Thomas forbade them to do this, and moved slowly up the steps into the choir, as the four knights burst into the building. They cried, "Where is the traitor?" Thomas then returned to the transept, crying, "Here am I; not traitor, but archbishop and priest of God." A fierce altercation followed, but soon the knights drew their swords and slew him as he stood. His last words were, "For the Name of Jesus and in defence of the Church, I am ready to embrace death."



X Place where St. Thomas was slain.

PLAN OF CHRIST CHURCH, CANTERBURY.

(The buildings are mainly of later date than 1170.)

10. The cruel murderers of Thomas had done the worst service they could to their master. Against the living archbishop Henry had been able to contend on equal terms, but he was powerless to hold his own against the outburst of popular indignation which attended their deed of blood. Men forgot that the cause for which Thomas had died was not the cause of the Church, but the cause of the see of Canterbury over its rival York. They hailed the dead archbishop as a martyr who had laid down his life for the sake of justice. Stories were spread of his sanctity and devout-

Canonization of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

It was believed that miracles were wrought by his mangled

remains. Pilgrims flocked from all Christendom to do honour to the martyr's tomb in Canterbury Cathedral. Alexander III., who had neglected him in his life, declared him a saint after his death. All went ill with Henry until he solemnly renounced the Constitutions of Clarendon, bought off the threatened censures of the pope by an unconditional submission, and purged himself of complicity in Thomas's death. As the last sign of his penitence Henry himself went on pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas, and was scourged with rods as a penance for his hasty words. In the broader question of the treatment of criminous clerks the martyred archbishop secured a substantial victory. From that time till the Reformation the ecclesiastical courts remained the sole tribunals in which a clerk could be condemned. All that Henry gained was that henceforth all persons accused of crimes were in the first instance brought before the king's tribunals; but any criminal who could prove that he was a clergyman, was allowed what was called *benefit of clergy*, and the king's courts had no more to say to him. It shows how widespread was clerical privilege that the proof of clergy required was ability to read Latin. Despite all Henry's power the Church remained a state within the State, and the strongest of his successors was warned by the great king's failure to respect those inordinate privileges of the clergy for which Thomas thought he had laid down his life.

11. The long struggle with Archbishop Thomas quickened rather than slackened Henry's zeal to improve the government of his dominions. Hitherto he had been content to restore the system of Henry I. Now that he had accomplished that, he began to devise new laws of his own. Henry I. had done a great work, but in his scheme the old popular institutions of Anglo-Saxon times and the new monarchical institutions of the Norman kings had not been completely welded into a single scheme. It was the special work of Henry II. to put an end to this double system. His reign has been called a *period of amalgamation*, because he joined together what was best in old and new alike. Before he died the old local courts of the shire and hundred were closely bound together with the new royal courts administered by the king's officials. Not only was there an amalgamation of English and Norman institutions; the English and Norman races, which had hitherto stood apart from each other, were similarly united by community of interests and frequent intermarriages. We have the testimony of one of Henry's ministers that the two peoples were

already so indistinguishable that no one knew who was a Norman or who was an Englishman by race. The higher classes still spoke French, and French Christian names alone were popular. But these French-speaking Englishmen were becoming English in feeling, and as the old Norman families died out, new ones arose who had neither estates nor kinsmen in Normandy, and were sometimes purely English in blood.

12. Henry II. was one of the greatest legislators in English history. The most important of his laws are called *Assizes*, and the first of these was the *Assize of Clarendon*, drawn up in that same Wiltshire hunting-lodge that had witnessed the beginning of Henry's struggle with Becket. The *Assize of Clarendon* completed the constitution of the new judicial system, towards which things had been drifting since the reign of Henry I. By it the king's justices were directed to go on circuit throughout the country, and visit every shire in turn and try criminals. At their coming each county court was to choose a committee of landholders, which was to bring before it all persons suspected of criminal offences within the shire. This body was called a *jury* because its members were sworn (*jurati*) to accuse truly. It was called a *jury of presentment* because it presented criminals for trial before the justice. The justice represented the new jurisdiction of the crown, the jury the old popular court of the shire. Their combination in this judicial system proved permanent. The modern *Grand Jury* still continues to discharge the work of Henry's juries of presentment, and to this day the king's judges go on circuit to each shire after the fashion systematized by the *Assize of Clarendon*. Ten years later the *Assize of Clarendon* was reissued in the *Assize of Northampton*, which imposed severer penalties on offenders.

The Assize of Clarendon, 1166.

The Assize of Northampton, 1176.

13. Another law of Henry's, the *Grand Assize* of uncertain date, extended the jury system from criminal to civil cases. Since the Norman conquest, the ordinary way of deciding disputes about land was by *trial by battle*. The idea was that the two claimants should fight out their claims with each other, and that God would work a miracle by giving the victory not to the better warrior, but to the man with the better claim. So crude a system now seemed impious to the clergy and foolish to the lawyer. The *Grand Assize* gave claimants to estates the opportunity of referring their claim to the decision of a jury, as an alternative to the barbaric custom of trial by battle. This was welcomed as an especial boon to the weak and feeble.

The Grand Assize.

14. Another famous law of Henry's was the *Assize of Arms* of 1181, by which the old English national militia of the *fyrð* was revised and organized. By it every freeman was required to provide himself with arms of a kind suitable to his estate, so that he might when called upon defend the country from invasion or assist in putting down rebellion. This assize made the feudal service of the barons less important. Long before this the kings had established the custom of levying taxes called *scutage*, or shield-money, from the military tenants, whereby they paid to the crown sums of money instead of serving personally. With this money the king was able to hire professional soldiers, who fought better than the barons. But the mercenaries were expensive and unpopular, and after the *Assize of Arms* Henry employed them for foreign service only, and depended chiefly on the *fyrð* for home service. Despot though he was, he was popular enough to be able to trust the English people to bear arms, even though those arms might be used against him.

15. In 1184 Henry issued the *Assize of Woodstock*, or the *Assize of the Forest*. He was an indefatigable hunter, and his chief object was to protect the game which he preserved for his sport. Moreover, like his predecessors, Henry regarded the forests as the districts specially subject to his arbitrary control. This assize accordingly was very severe, and shows Henry's government at its worst. It was the first formal code of regulations drawn up for the forests, and something was gained when even a severe law was set up in place of the royal caprice which had hitherto alone regulated them. A system of forest courts was established analogous to those of the rest of the country. Even in the forests Henry found scope for his favourite system of juries.

16. Henry II. won back the authority over Britain as a whole which his grandfather had exercised. The lords marcher in Wales regained the position which had been threatened under Stephen; but the princes of Gwynedd, though acknowledging Henry as their overlord, were able in practice to keep him at arm's length. Thrice Henry led expeditions to the wilds of Snowdon, but not one of them was really successful. The result of this was that North Wales remained a strong and nearly independent national Welsh state; but Welsh and marcher lords alike looked up to Henry as supreme. Under him the Welsh bishops finally accepted the claims of the archbishop

of Canterbury to be their metropolitan. In 1188 Archbishop Baldwin traversed Wales from end to end to preach a new crusade. Scotland, even more than Wales, felt the weight of Henry's arm. We have seen how he compelled Malcolm iv. to surrender the advantages won by David under Stephen. Malcolm's brother and successor, William the Lion, was a warlike and powerful king. In 1173 he united with Henry's foreign and baronial enemies in a great attack on his power. Taken prisoner at Alnwick, he was forced, as the price of his release, to sign the ignominious treaty of Falaise; by this he fully accepted Henry as liege lord of Scotland, and admitted English garrisons into Edinburgh and other chief towns of his realm.

17. Henry II.'s reign is remarkable for the extension of the Norman power to Ireland. Ireland, which in the days of Anglo-Saxon barbarism had been the most civilized country in western Europe, had now fallen far away from its ancient glory. The land was divided among many petty kings, who were always waging war against each other. Though one of these claimed to be overlord of the whole land, he had little real power. The old Celtic system, by which the chief of each tribe really ruled over his clansmen, still prevailed, and kept back the political development of the island. Danish chieftains bore rule over coast towns, such as Dublin, Cork, and Limerick, and added a new element to the general confusion. The Church was as disorganized as the State.

The last period of Irish independence.

18. The quarrels of the Irish with each other first gave the Normans a pretext for establishing themselves in Ireland. The heroes of the Norman conquest of Ireland were the Norman marchers of South Wales, who extended their power over the island by the same devices that had secured for their grandfathers the richer parts of South Wales. Dermot, king of Leinster, was driven in 1166 from his dominions, and rashly invited some of the Norman lords of South Wales to help him to win them back. At their head was Richard of Clare, surnamed *Strongbow*, lord of Chepstow and palatine earl of Pembroke. He restored Dermot to his kingdom, married his daughter, and seized upon his dominions after his death. Other Norman adventurers followed his example, and added to the confusion of Ireland by setting up small feudal lordships in the districts which they had won by their swords. Henry II. had no part in their conquests, but he became alarmed lest they should establish a power dangerous to himself. In 1171 he betook himself to

The Norman conquest of Ireland.

Ireland, in order to establish his authority over Irish, Dane, and Norman alike. None dared resist him. The native Irish welcomed him as their protector against the new-comers from Wales, and the Normans submitted because they had not sufficient strength to withstand him. In these circumstances it was easy for Henry to obtain acknowledgments of his supremacy from all the chief powers in Ireland. He added to his titles that of *lord of Ireland*, and set up an English government in Dublin. He introduced Norman ecclesiastics, who strove to reorganize the Irish Church after the Roman pattern. English traders established themselves in the towns, and strong castles kept the fertile plains in subjection. But the Irish clans held their own amidst the mountains and bogs, and everywhere Henry's influence was very superficial. In this fashion Henry carried out in a way the dreams of Edgar and William I. He was the first English king who was in any sense lord of all the British islands.

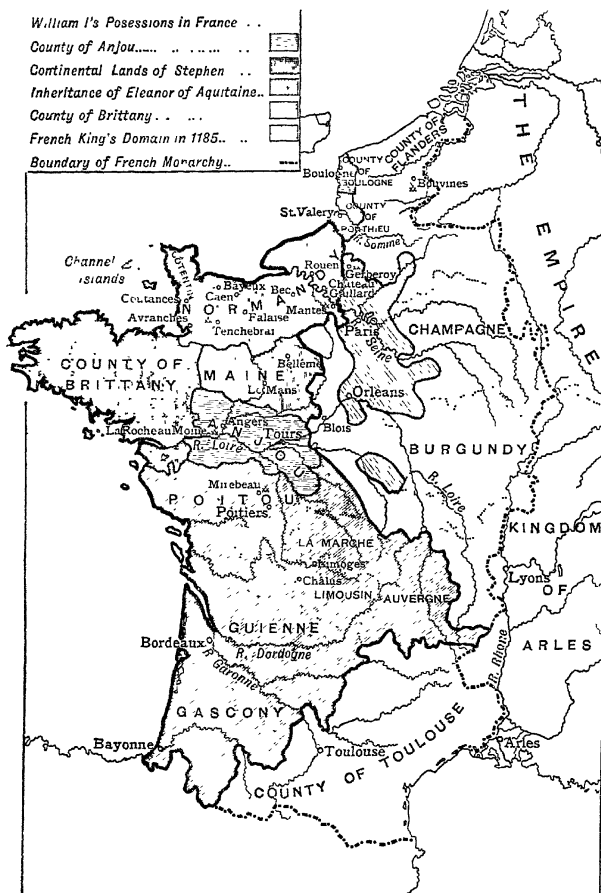
19. By inheritance and marriage Henry was suzerain over all western France. From his father came the county of Anjou and Touraine; Normandy and Maine he inherited from his mother; his marriage made him duke of Aquitaine. His wife, Eleanor, was the heiress of the old line of the dukes of Aquitaine, whose authority extended over all south-western France, from the river Loire to the Pyrenees, and from the Bay of Biscay to the mountains of Auvergne and the Cevennes. The northern part of this region was the county of Poitou, whose capital was Poitiers. More to the south lay Guienne and Gascony, of which the chief towns were Bordeaux and Bayonne. Over the whole of this region the French kings had never exercised any substantial authority, and even the dukes of Aquitaine were little more than its overlords. Real power belonged to the turbulent feudal nobles, whose constant feuds with each other, and with the towns, kept the whole land full of violence and bloodshed. Nevertheless it was a rich and vigorous region, differing so widely from northern France that its inhabitants looked upon both king of Paris and dukes of Rouen as foreigners. South of the Dordogne the people spoke the Gascon or Provençal tongue, which was a different language from the French of the north. They cherished dearly their local independence, and even a strong ruler like Henry was not able to subject them to the severe discipline which had made England peaceable and law-abiding.

20. Eleanor of Aquitaine was a woman of vigorous character and unruly disposition. She had married Henry because she had been

at variance with her first husband, Louis VII. of France, who had wedded her for the sake of her dominions. Before long she quarrelled with Henry also, and inspired her sons to join Henry II. with her former husband in attempts to overthrow and his family. It was easier for her to do this, since

Henry was an affectionate father, and anxious to share with his sons the government of his dominions. We have seen how he crowned his eldest son Henry king in 1170, and proposed to make him his partner in power. He wished to establish the younger sons also in the government of some outlying portion of his dominions. Richard, the second son, was made duke of Aquitaine, and showed great valour and energy in his efforts to reduce his mother's inheritance to some sort of order. Geoffrey, his third son, married the heiress of Brittany, and the lands under Henry's overlordship were still further extended when Geoffrey became reigning count of Brittany under his father's supremacy. John, the youngest and best beloved of Henry's sons, was married to the heiress of the great Gloucester earldom, and sent to rule Ireland. But none of Henry's sons were worthy of their father's generosity; their constant intrigues and rebellions embittered the last years of his life

21. Neighbouring princes were extremely jealous of Henry's great position, and did their best to undermine his power. Among his chief enemies was the count of Toulouse, the here- Henry's
ditary rival of the duke of Aquitaine, and against his foreign
Henry waged, in 1159, a war called the *war of Toulouse*; policy.
later on he compelled the count of Toulouse to do homage to him. The count of Toulouse was only saved from destruction by the help afforded him by Louis VII. of France, against whom The war of
Henry had scruples in waging war because Louis was Toulouse,
his overlord. In the hope of keeping up friendly relations 1159.
with France, Henry married his eldest son to Louis's daughter; but Louis was as treacherous as Henry's own children. During the period when the outcry against Henry as the cause of St. Thomas's death had turned public opinion against him, Louis made an alliance with the young king and his brothers Richard and Geoffrey. This grew into a great confederation of all the English king's enemies. William of Scotland, as we have seen, joined the league, and the feudal barons, both in England and Normandy, The wars of
though afraid to attack Henry so long as he was at peace, 1173 and
eagerly availed themselves of his difficulties with his 1174.
children and foreign neighbours to unfurl once more the banner of baronial independence. In 1173 and 1174 the great struggle



Emery Walker sc.

FRANCE IN THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES, SHOWING THE CONTINENTAL DOMINIONS OF THE NORMAN AND ANGEVIN KINGS.

between Henry and his enemies extended from the Tweed to the Pyrenees. Henry was everywhere victorious. We have seen how he crushed William of Scotland and forced him to sign the humiliating treaty of Falaise. Louis of France failed in his invasion of Normandy, and the fleet with which the younger Henry set out to invade England was scattered by a storm. The fidelity of the official class, and the loyalty of the English people, made it an easy matter for Henry to suppress the baronial rebellion. Over his nobles his triumph was a permanent one; the rising of 1173 and 1174 was the last of the many feudal revolts against the national monarchy which had begun a hundred years earlier with the rebellions of earls Ralph and Roger against William I.

22. For the next few years Henry ruled in peace. With wonderful magnanimity he forgave his rebellious children, and restored them to their governments. He was now one of the greatest kings in Christendom, and foreign princes eagerly sought his alliance. He married his daughters to the kings of Castile and Sicily, the count of Toulouse, and to Henry the Lion, the greatest of the German dukes and the rival of the mighty Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. By these alliances, and by other means, Henry obtained powerful support against his natural enemy the king of France. He established friendship which long outlasted his life with Castile, the chief Spanish kingdom, with Germany, and with Flanders. For the rest of the Middle Ages there was a traditional friendship between England and these three lands, just as there was a traditional enmity with France. Thus the foreign policy of the Angevin king coloured the foreign policy of England for several centuries.

23. The folly and wickedness of his children cast a gloom over the last years of Henry's life. The young King Henry went to war with his brother Richard, and forced the old king to take up arms on behalf of the latter. In the course of the struggle the young king expired in 1183. Geoffrey of Brittany died two years later, in 1185; but Richard still gave him plenty of trouble. In 1189 Richard once more rose in revolt, and made a close alliance with the son of Louis VII., Philip II., called Augustus, who became king of France in 1180. It was a grievous disappointment to Henry that his youngest son, John, who had hitherto remained faithful, joined his brother in this rebellion. After this Henry had no heart to fight against his treacherous sons. Smitten with a mortal illness, he threw himself on his bed, and cried, "Let things go as they will:

I care no more for myself or for anything else in the world." A few days later he died, on July 7, murmuring, "Shame, shame on a conquered king." Here Henry was unjust to himself; his work was far from being undone, even by the treachery of his own sons. He had established the unity of England on so firm a basis that it could not be shaken even by the incompetence of those who came after him.

port of the crusading kingdom, which had recently fallen into Saladin's hands. Philip Augustus had arrived there before him, and the two kings soon forced Acre to surrender. From Acre Richard marched towards Jerusalem, and arrived within a few miles of the holy city: but bad weather prevented further progress, especially as the French and English elements in the army were quarrelling bitterly with each other. Philip Augustus was already jealous of his old ally, and hurried back to Europe to profit by his absence. In these circumstances all Richard's personal heroism could not procure complete success for his cause. In 1192 he made a truce by which the Christians were consoled in some measure for the loss of Jerusalem by the condition that pilgrims were allowed free access to the holy places.

3. Richard then started to return to Europe: news reached him that Philip Augustus was so hostile that the direct route back through France was unsafe. Richard therefore determined to travel by way of Germany. To avoid Richard's attention he went in disguise, accompanied by only a few followers; but he soon attracted notice, and near Vienna was arrested by Leopold, duke of Austria, an old crusader with whom he had quarrelled in the Holy Land. The supreme ruler of Germany was now the Emperor Henry VI., son of Frederick Barbarossa who had died on the crusade. Henry VI. hated Richard because he had given a refuge to his brother-in-law, Henry the Lion, whom Frederick Barbarossa had expelled from Germany. He welcomed the accident which had brought Richard within Leopold's power, and soon the Austrian duke handed Richard over to the emperor's direct custody. Henry kept Richard in prison until he agreed to pay the enormous ransom of £100,000—a sum almost amounting to two years of the royal revenue, at a time when the people were taxed to the uttermost. Besides this, Richard was forced to surrender his kingdom to the Emperor, and receive it back as a fief of the empire. In compensation for this humiliation Henry granted Richard the kingdom of Burgundy, or Arles—a grant which meant nothing at all, as Henry had little power over that district. Meanwhile strenuous efforts were made to raise the king's ransom. Every landholder was called upon to pay a fourth of his income, and the very chalices in the churches were melted down to make up the sum. By 1194 the money was paid, and Richard was free to go home.

4. During the five years of Richard's absence there had been much confusion and some civil war in England. Yet it was a

remarkable testimony to the abiding strength of Henry II.'s administrative system that the machinery of government continued

England during Richard's absence, 1189-1194.	to work even in the absence of the sovereign. Bishop Longchamp, the justiciar, was not a successful minister. He offended the barons by his pride and his foreign ways, and they called on Earl John, the king's younger brother, to help them to drive him from power.
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Longchamp could not resist the force they brought against him, and was forced in 1191 to quit the realm. At that moment Walter of Coutances, archbishop of Rouen, came back from crusade with a letter from Richard, nominating him as justiciar. The barons accepted the king's candidate, and the archbishop ruled England peaceably for two years. But when Richard's captivity was known, Philip of France invaded Normandy, and tried to capture Rouen. John allied himself with the French king, and rose in revolt against Richard. It is good evidence that the archbishop of Rouen was a wise minister, that he drove Philip out of Normandy, put down John's revolt, and raised the king's ransom.

5. In 1194 Richard again appeared in England. His second visit was almost as short as his first, and, as before, he devoted most of his energy to raising money. He generously forgave his treacherous brother, but was eager to have revenge on the French king, who had striven to rob him of his dominions when he was the emperor's captive. Leaving his comrade on the crusade, Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, as justiciar, Richard soon left England, and was never seen there again. He spent the rest of his life in waging war against the French king, and left the whole administration of England in the hands of the justiciar. Hubert Walter was a nephew of Ranulf Glanville, justiciar of Henry II., and had been well trained in the work of administration. He was powerful enough to make several improvements in the administrative system, and was ingenious in devising expedients to supply Richard with money for fighting his battles. In 1198 he imposed such burdens upon the people that they could bear them no longer. When called upon to furnish knights to fight for Richard in France, the barons resisted. Hugh of Avalon, bishop of Lincoln, a saintly man who had once been a hermit, made himself the spokesman of the opposition. He declared that he would rather go back to his old hermit's life than lay fresh burdens on the tenants of his bishopric. Hubert was forced to withdraw the proposal, and soon

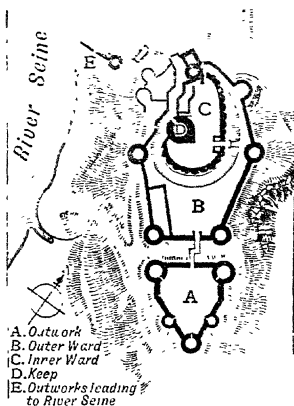
after resigned office. His successor was a layman, Geoffrey Fitz Peter, earl of Essex.

6. During all these years Richard was doing his best to break down the power of Philip of France, and achieved a fair measure of success. To protect Rouen and Normandy from invasion he built a new castle on a chalk cliff dominating the Seine, near the town of Les Andelys. It was a large and well-planned structure, and it was built within twelve months. Proud of his skill as an engineer, Richard cried, "Is not this a fine saucy baby of mine, this child of a year old?"

Richard's
last wars
and death,
1199.

From this jest Richard's castle took its name of *Château Gaillard*—that is, *Saucy Castle*. Gallant soldier though he was, Richard's campaigns were somewhat unfruitful.

His energies were consumed in petty wars which had no real influence on events. In one of these he met his death in 1199. A vassal of Richard's, lord of Châlus, near Limoges, discovered a treasure buried in the earth. Richard claimed the find for himself, on the ground that, as treasure-trove, it belonged to him as overlord. His vassal resisted, and Richard went in person to besiege the castle of Châlus, which the rebel held against him. One day, as the king



PLAN OF CHÂTEAU GAILLARD.

was watching the progress of the siege, he was struck in the breast by the bolt of a crossbow. The wound was treated by so unskilful a surgeon that the flesh mortified. As Richard lay dying the castle was taken, and the soldier who had shot him was brought captive before him. "What have I done to thee," said the dying king, "that thou shouldst slay me?" "Thou hast slain," answered the archer, "my father and two of my brothers; torture me as thou wilt, I shall die gladly since I have slain thee." Richard ordered the man to be set free. He then gathered his barons round him, and urged them to accept John as his successor. He died on

April 6, 1199, and, in spite of his commands, the crossbowman was cruelly put to death. Though he had done so little for England, Richard's reputation as a warrior long kept his memory green. Apart from his personal exploits, the importance of his reign rests in the fact that it proved that the foundations of the system of Henry II. had been so carefully laid that the ministers were able to rule England in peace, despite Richard's absence and neglect.

CHAPTER VII

JOHN LACKLAND (1199-1216)

Chief dates :

- 1199. Accession of John.
- 1204. Loss of Normandy.
- 1208. England put under Interdict.
- 1213. John's submission to Innocent III.
- 1215. The Great Charter.
- 1216. Death of John.

1. ON Richard's death John hurried to England, and easily got himself accepted as king. He was not the nearest heir by birth, for his elder brother, Geoffrey of Brittany, had left a son named Arthur. Many who distrusted John wished that Arthur should succeed Richard. But Arthur was a boy, and it was quite in accordance with old English precedent that his uncle, who was a grown man, should be preferred to him. Philip of France, ever anxious to make mischief in the Angevin dominions, supported Arthur's cause; but Queen Eleanor, though now very old, used all her influence against her grandson, and in favour of her youngest son. On May 27 John was crowned in Westminster Abbey by Hubert Walter.

2. John's previous career was ominous for the future. When sent as a young man to rule Ireland, his petulance and folly had so disgusted the Irish chieftains that Henry II. was compelled to withdraw from him the government of the island. We have seen already his treachery and ingratitude to his father and elder brother. Able, like all the Angevins, and capable, on occasion, of energetic action, both as a warrior and statesman, he wrecked his whole career by the narrow selfishness which sacrificed all his highest interests to gratify the caprice of the moment. His life was foul; he was cruel, treacherous, and deceitful; he could be bound by no promise, and kept steadfast in no course of action. The history of William Rufus had shown that a bad man might be a competent king. As a man, John

Accession of John, 1199.

His character.

was not much worse than Rufus: as a king, he was utterly lacking in that intelligent sense of self-interest which gave purpose to Rufus's wickedest acts of tyranny. From the beginning of his reign he was only saved from disaster by the restraining influence exercised over him by three wise advisers. His mother, Eleanor, secured his succession to the whole of the Angevin Empire. Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury, kept up some sort of terms between him and the Church. The justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz Peter, managed, despite many obstacles, to carry on the internal government of England on the lines laid down by Henry II. As time went on the removal of these three faithful friends left John free to follow his own caprice, and in each case his personal action involved him in humiliation and disaster. The death of Eleanor was quickly followed by the loss of Normandy. The death of Hubert Walter soon led to a mortal quarrel with the Church. When Fitz Peter died John blundered into a quarrel with his English subjects which cost him his greatest and last humiliation. Round these three great calamities the history of his reign centred. The Angevin Empire, which had survived the neglect of Richard, was destroyed by the active tyranny of John.

3. It was with great difficulty that Eleanor had succeeded in winning over all the Angevin dominions in France to John's side.

John and She was helped by the treachery of Philip II., who
Arthur of took up arms on Arthur's behalf, but kept all the con-
Brittany. quests he made for himself. This annoyed Arthur's

friends so much that they made terms with John, and finally, in 1200, Philip himself recognized his rival as his brother's heir. Within a few months of this recognition John's folly and greed compelled him to fight once more for his dominions. He repudiated his rich wife Isabella of Gloucester, and married Isabella of Angoulême, the heiress of the county of that name. Isabella was betrothed to Hugh of Lusignan, son of the count of La Marche, a powerful lord of Poitou, who was bitterly incensed at losing both the lady and her possessions. He called upon the barons of Poitou to help him; many of these had grievances of their own against their capricious sovereign, and they willingly appealed to Philip II. as overlord to protect them from the lawless acts of their immediate lord. After long delays Philip accepted their appeal, and in 1202 summoned John to Paris to answer the complaints brought against him. John refused to appear, and the court of the French king condemned him to lose all his lands in France. Philip at once invaded Normandy, in the hope of enforcing the sentence

in person. He recognized Arthur of Brittany as lord of Aquitaine and Anjou, and invited him to conquer his inheritance. Arthur, though only fifteen years old, showed gallantry and resolution. He invaded Poitou, and took possession of Mirebeau, one of its chief strongholds. His grandmother, Eleanor, who was in the town, was forced to take refuge in the castle, where she was strictly blockaded by her grandson. John himself came to his mother's rescue, defeated Arthur's troops, and took his nephew prisoner. Arthur was imprisoned at Rouen, and was murdered in 1203 by his uncle's orders. Next year old Queen Eleanor died, and John's cause speedily collapsed.

4. Philip II. threw all his energies into the conquest of Normandy. John remained inactive at Rouen, and seemed unmoved by his rival's successes. "Let Philip go on," he said; "whatever he takes, I shall retake it in a single day." At last Philip besieged Chateau Gaillard, and Anjou. Richard's favourite castle held out gallantly for eight months, and its reduction was one of the greatest feats of military engineering of the time. John made but feeble efforts to succour the garrison, and in April, 1204, Philip captured the place by assault. Normandy was now open to attack, and many of its barons, disgusted with John's slackness, made common cause with the French king. With the surrender of Rouen in June, the whole of the duchy passed into Philip's hands. Next year Philip established his power over the greater part of Poitou. Anjou was overrun with equal ease, and by 1206 John's authority over France was limited to the lands south of the Charente.

5. For the rest of his reign John made half-hearted and generally unsuccessful attempts to reconquer his father's lands, and the levity and instability of the Poitevin barons gave him many chances of turning the tables on Philip. His most serious attempt was made in 1213, when he managed to win back much of the ground lost in Poitou and Anjou. His nephew Otto, son of his sister and Henry the Lion, who had been brought up at his court, was now Roman emperor, through the support of Pope Innocent III. Otto, however, soon quarrelled with the pope, and as John was also on bad terms with Rome, uncle and nephew worked closely together. As Philip of France was the close ally of Innocent, Otto and John formed a great league of excommunicated princes against him. In 1214, while Otto carried on the war in the northern frontier of France, John went to Anjou and besieged the

Battles of
La Roche au
Moine and
Bouvines,
1214.

castle of La Roche au Moine, on the Loire. Louis, Philip II.'s eldest son, led an army to its relief, and a battle seemed imminent, but at the last moment John shirked an engagement, and fled to the south. In the same year Otto was defeated by Philip in a great battle at Bouvines, near Tournai. This double disaster broke up the coalition. It secured the establishment of Philip's power in Anjou and Poitou, and for the rest of his life domestic concerns occupied John too fully to allow him to contend any longer against his adversary. Henceforth the northern parts of the Angevin empire were permanently annexed to France. Though the circumstances of their loss was very disgraceful to John, yet the separation of England and Normandy proved, in the long run, a good thing for France and England. The two countries were bound to remain separate and independent nations, and it was best for both that they should be so. Philip's conquests so immensely increased the strength of France that henceforward the French monarchy, so feeble under the early Capetians, became one of the greatest states of Europe. It was also a gain to England that Normandy should no longer be under the rule of the English king. Up to then many English barons had had estates in both countries, and the consequent division of their interests made it hard for them to become good Englishmen. They had now to choose between France and England. Those who had their main estates in England lost their Norman possessions, so that their sole interests were for the future on this side of the channel. Thus the separation of the kingdom and the duchy was another step forward in the growth of English unity and English national feeling. The Norman aristocracy of England had no longer any reason for acting otherwise than as Englishmen.

6. In 1205 Hubert Walter, the wise archbishop of Canterbury, died. His death removed a powerful check from the king, and a dispute about the succession soon led John into a fierce conflict with the Church. The right of electing Canterbury, any bishop rested with the chapter of his cathedral, 1205. and the Benedictine monks of the cathedral of Christ Church, Canterbury, had an undoubted legal claim to choose the new archbishop. But the monks were apt to take a narrow view of their duty, and to forget that the selection of the head of the English Church was a business that concerned the whole country. As a matter of fact, the king had always a large share in deciding who was to be archbishop, and the tendency was to reduce what was called the canonical election by the chapter to the mere form

of the monks accepting the king's nominee. On this occasion, however, the monks of Christ Church could not agree among each other or with the king. The younger brethren, thinking of the interests of their monastery, rather than the interests of the Church as a whole, elected as archbishop their sub-prior Reginald, a boastful and commonplace monk, with no claim to so distinguished an office. They did not ask John's permission to proceed to election, and made their choice in the utmost secrecy. They sent Reginald to Rome to get the *pallium* from the pope, and told him to say nothing about their action. Reginald, however, was so pleased with his new dignity that he could not keep it to himself. News of the monks' hasty choice soon reached John, who in great anger ordered the chapter to choose one of his ministers. John de Grey, bishop of Norwich, who was a mere politician. Some of the monks consented to do this from fear of the king, and soon Grey also was urging the pope to give him the *pallium* as the rightly elected archbishop.

7. As supreme head of the Church the popes had long claimed a voice in the appointment of the chief ecclesiastical dignitaries. A disputed election such as this always gave them a special opportunity of interfering with effect. The Roman see was now held by Innocent III., who was perhaps the most powerful of all the popes of the Middle Ages. He was eager to extend his influence in every direction, and being a high-minded and honourable man, was anxious that the best possible person should become archbishop of Canterbury. He soon convinced himself that both Reginald and John were unfit for so great a burden. He summoned representatives of the chapter to Rome, and advised them to pass over both candidates and make a fresh election. He recommended them to choose Stephen Langton, an Englishman by birth, and a famous theologian, who was then living at Rome as a cardinal of the Roman Church. The monks could not resist papal pressure, and elected Langton. Thereupon Innocent gave him the *pallium*, and consecrated him bishop with his own hands.

Innocent III.
procures
Langton's
appointment,
1207.

8. Langton was likely to be a much better archbishop than the foolish monk and the greedy worldling respectively favoured by chapter and king. But however wise Innocent's appointment was, it was a dangerous thing that the head of the English Church should be forced upon the country by the pope, and wiser kings than John might well have hesitated to accept the nomination from Rome. There is no need, however, to

Quarrel of
John and
Innocent III.

suppose that deep motives of policy and a high-minded desire to resist papal aggression moved John to resist Innocent's nominee. John's sole wish was to get as archbishop a dependant who would help him to plunder and oppress the Church. But, whatever his motives, he would not give way to the pope, and as Innocent was equally unbending, a fierce conflict broke out between them. Meanwhile the church of Canterbury remained vacant, for Innocent would not recognize Grey, and John would not allow Langton to enter the country. After a year Innocent put Eng-

The Interdict, 1208.

land under an interdict. An *interdict* was one of the severest punishments which the Church could inflict.

By it all public worship was forbidden; churches were closed; no bell was tolled; the dead were buried in unconsecrated ground without any religious rites; it was a favour that the dying were admitted to the last sacraments, and baptism allowed to the newborn child. Men thought that God's favour was withdrawn from a land under interdict, and in that age of faith the loss of the consolations of the Church was a thing grievous to be borne. John, who was as godless as William Rufus, cared little for the interdict. He was strong enough to force many of the clergy to continue their services and ignore the pope's orders. Those priests who observed the interdict were driven into banishment. A year passed by, and John remained as obstinate as ever. In 1209 John's ex-communication, 1209. Innocent *excommunicated* John; that is to say, he refused to allow him to participate in any of the services of the Church. The king was as careless of excommunication as he had been of the interdict, and Innocent was forced to seek a more effective weapon against him. As head of the Church the pope had long claimed the power of declaring that princes who were foes to the Church had ceased to reign over their dominions. By virtue of this Innocent had already deposed John's nephew, Otto. In 1212 he declared that if John resisted any longer he would deprive him of his throne. Innocent called upon John's enemy, Philip II., who was now a close friend of the papacy, to execute the sentence. Philip willingly accepted the commission, and prepared to invade England.

9. John was seriously alarmed, and sought to buy off the pope's hostility by an offer to accept Langton as archbishop. Innocent insisted on a more abject submission, and John, in despair, yielded to all his demands. In 1213 there came to Dover a papal envoy named Pandulf, appointed to reconcile John to the Church if he

John's submission to Innocent, 1213.

fulfilled the hard conditions imposed upon him. John agreed to recognize Langton as archbishop, to restore to their benefices the partisans of the pope whom he had banished, and to surrender his crown to the triumphant pope. Two days later he received it back again from Pandulf, on promising to be the pope's vassal for the future. Like any other feudal vassal, he took an oath of fealty to Innocent as to his suzerain, and performed the humiliating act of homage to the pope's representative. Moreover, he agreed to pay henceforth a tribute of 1000 marks a year to the Roman see.

10. Thus John became the vassal of the pope, as Richard had become the vassal of the emperor. To the men of the time there seemed little that was humiliating in both acts; to moderns both seem equally disgraceful. As regards their consequences, there was all the difference in the world between the two surrenders. The emperor's power was small, and constantly growing less. He had no means of enforcing his lordship over England, so that Richard's surrender was a mere form which even the emperor did not care to revive, and which was soon forgotten. The pope had more influence in every country in western Europe than the king, and he had in the clergy permanent agents of his will. To the enormous ecclesiastical authority exercised by the pope in England after the Norman conquest was now added political supremacy as overlord. Henceforth England was regarded as depending on Rome in the same way that Gascony depended on France, or Wales on England. John, however, thought little of the ultimate consequences of his act, for to him it was but a move in the game. Henceforth he had the pope on his side, and having by his surrender stopped the French invasion, he was in a position to renew the attacks on France, which ended so disastrously, as we have seen, at La Roche au Moine and Bouvines. Luckily he was turned from this purpose by a quarrel with his subjects.

John becomes the vassal of the Papacy.

11. From his accession John had ruled England capriciously and tyrannically, and had offended many of the most powerful of his barons. It was, however, no new thing for king and nobles to be at variance. Since the days of the conquest the king always relied upon his people as a whole to support him against aristocratic revolt. But times had changed since the reign of Henry II. Cut off from Normandy, the barons now thought mainly of England, and were rapidly forgetting the feudal tradition which had made it the ambition of each one of them to be a little king over his own

The breach between John and his barons.

estate. The baronial leaders were still turbulent and selfish in their policy, but their object was henceforward not to upset the central government so much as to take a prominent share in its administration. Their aims were henceforward so far national that there was no reason why Englishmen should not support them. Moreover, John had ruled so badly that the people might well support any party which aimed at reducing his authority.

12. John's excessive demands for foreign service first fired the indignation of his barons. In 1213 many refused to follow him to Poitou, and in 1214 the same magnates declined to pay a scutage which he demanded. While the king was abroad the barons met in council, and Langton laid before them Henry I.'s charter of liberties, and advised them to obtain a similar document from John. Up to 1213 the prudent rule of the justiciar, Fitz Peter, had partly checked John's tyranny; but the justiciar now died, and John, with characteristic ingratitude, rejoiced at the removal of the restraint which Geoffrey had imposed upon him. During John's long absence abroad the barons organized resistance. When he returned in 1214, he came back disgraced and vanquished. Finding that there was no chance of exacting concessions by peaceful means, the barons took arms and went to war against their sovereign. Every one now deserted John, save a few faithful nobles like William Marshall, earl of Pembroke, who believed that they were bound to support the king, even when he was a bad one. John's main reliance was upon his foreign favourites and mercenary soldiers imported from abroad to overawe his kingdom. With such backing it was impossible for John to hold out long against his subjects, and he soon yielded as abjectly to his barons as he had formerly surrendered to the pope. On June 15, 1215, he met the baronial leaders at a meadow on the banks of the Thames, between Windsor and Staines, called Runnymede. There he sealed the articles of submission which the barons had drawn up for his acceptance.

13. This document is famous as *Magna Carta*, or the Great Charter, and is justly regarded as marking the beginnings of English liberty. From the conquest to this date the Norman kings had reigned as despots. The union of all classes against John now forced the king to agree that his authority should be limited. The clauses of the charter were to some extent modelled on that of Henry I., but there was a great difference between a charter granted with the king's goodwill and a charter imposed on a reluctant king at the point of the sword.

Moreover, the charter of 1215 was a much fuller document than that of 1100. It contained few novelries, but clearly stated the customs of the realm in the days of Henry II. It promised freedom to the English Church, and especially freedom to chapters to elect their bishops. A large number of clauses carefully limited the rights of the crown to exact feudal dues from the barons, and the barons were similarly required to treat their own tenants leniently. London and the towns were to have their liberties preserved; merchants had freedom to trade in times of peace. No new aids or taxes were to be levied by the king without the consent of the great council of barons. Justice was to be denied to no man, and no freeman was to be imprisoned or outlawed, save according to the judgment of his peers and the law of the land.

14. John accepted the barons' demands without the least intention of keeping his word. His object was to gain time, and, as soon as he could, he repudiated his promise. He persuaded Innocent III. that the charter was against the interests of the Roman Church because it reduced the power of the pope's vassal. In consequence of this Innocent issued a bull declaring the document invalid. John then raised an army of foreign mercenaries, and went to war against the barons. For once he showed energy and activity. Before long he pressed the nobles so hard that they were forced to call in foreign aid. They requested Louis of France, who had defeated John at La Roche au Moine, to come over and help them and be their king. Louis at once accepted their offer, and landed in England. Even with his aid the barons had still a hard task before them. The pope excommunicated Louis, and few of the clergy dared to support him, while many of the officials of the school of Henry II. faithfully rallied round the king. However, on October 19, 1216, John died suddenly in the midst of the struggle. He was the worst of English monarchs, and his persistent ill fortune was entirely his own fault. It was no wonder that men called him, in shame, John Lackland. With him the Norman despotism came to an end. It had done its work in making England peaceable and united, and was no longer needed.

Renewal of
the war of
king and
barons.

Death of
John, 1216.

CHAPTER VIII

FEUDAL BRITAIN

1. THE chief results of the Norman conquest were to stimulate the energy of England, to promote its unity, and to break down the wall of separation that had hitherto divided it from the rest of the world. In a lesser degree the Normans exercised a similar influence over the non-English parts of the British Islands. They made English-speaking Scotland a feudal land as much as England.

Though their influence was more superficial in Celtic districts, they made their power felt in Celtic Scotland, in Wales, and in Ireland. Reduced to a common subjection under their restless and masterful Norman lords, the Irish and the Welsh, like the English, lost something of their ancient freedom, and were for the first time brought into more than nominal dependence upon an English king. Thus the Norman conquest, which finally brought about the union of England, did much to prepare the way for the later union of the British Isles. While, however, Norman and Englishman were amalgamated by the twelfth century into a single people, Celtic tribalism and Norman feudalism lay too far asunder to be capable of fusion. It resulted from this that Norman influence over Celtic lands ever remained what it originally was in England—that is, the rule of the alien based simply upon military force. For that reason it was more superficial than was the case in England. Nevertheless, the history of the British Islands would have been very different had there not been Norman conquests of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, as well as of England. To all these countries alike the conquest marks the chief turning-point of their history.

2. We have seen how the Norman kings completed the establishment of the feudal system of land tenure in England. In so doing, they brought our country into line with the general civilization of that mediæval Europe of which England soon became one of the important powers. Henceforward the isolation of Anglo-Saxon England was replaced by openness to new ideas, and

constant participation in all the great movements of the time. While Anglo-Saxon England lived its life apart in sluggish indifference to the world beyond, Norman and Angevin England stood in the forefront of every great European movement. Its kings were as powerful across the sea as in Britain. Its feudal institutions were those of the western world. Its knights lived the same life and fought after the same fashion as the warriors of the continent. Englishmen took their full share in the crusades and the other international movements of the time. This communion of sympathy was even greater in the domain of ideas than in the world of action. We shall see this in detail when we study the new position of the English Church.

Increased
dealings
between
Britain and
the conti-
nent.

3. The vital fact of the Norman and Angevin periods was the permanent establishment of the centralized despotism of the king. The only real checks to the caprice of the monarch were the nobles and great ecclesiastics, and even these had little power to control the king, save by directly waging war against him. The place of the *Witenagemot* as the council of the nation was now taken by the *Great Council*; which did not differ very greatly from it in constitution or powers. It was composed, during the twelfth century, of all the tenants in chief of the crown, but in practice only the more important tenants were in the habit of attending it. It agreed to new laws and to extraordinary taxes; but, like the *Witenagemot*, it seems seldom or never to have ventured to resist the wishes of a strong king. Even more under the monarch's control were the courts composed of officials appointed by him, such as the *Curia Regis* and the *Exchequer*, of which we have spoken elsewhere. In both of them the chief ministers of the crown had seats. Besides the *Justiciar*, the regent in the king's absence, and the prime minister when he was in England, the king's chief ministers were the *Chancellor*, who was a sort of secretary, issuing all writs and documents, and the *Treasurer*, who controlled the finances. It was generally thought best to give these offices to ecclesiastics, who were better educated than laymen, and were not able to hand on their powers to their families. The offices of state, held by lay lords, such as the military dignities of *Marshal* and *Constable*, became hereditary.

The king
and the
Great
Council.

4. The local courts of the *Shire* and *Hundred* were still continued. Though the feudal courts of the great landlords often usurped the jurisdiction of the hundred, the shire moot remained a strong body, though it also became in practice a court of the

landlords. The circuit and jury system of Henry II. brought it into close relations with the central government, and the kings found it very useful as a means of raising money and of ascertaining public opinion. The immense revenue of the crown was mainly derived by taxes on land. It was collected by the *Sheriffs* of the shires, who went twice a year to the Exchequer at Westminster to present their accounts and pay over the money they had raised. They were the chief agents of the king in dealing with the local government, and had much more power and importance than before the conquest.

5. Great as were the changes brought about by Norman influence, the vast majority of Englishmen still lived a life not very different from that of their ancestors before the conquest. Land remained the chief source of wealth, and nearly everybody depended on agriculture for his livelihood. Like the Anglo-Saxon thegns, the Norman nobles owed their importance to their being possessors of large landed estates. Though the kings looked with suspicion upon the political ambitions of the barons, they put no obstacles in the way of the accumulation of great estates under a single hand. War, however, and the unhealthy conditions of life made the duration of a baronial house extremely short. By the beginning of the thirteenth century there were few Norman houses left which could boast an uninterrupted descent from those who came over with the Conqueror. This was particularly the case with the *earldoms*, whose possessors still formed a small and powerful class at the head of the aristocracy. Next to them came the *greater barons*, who included all tenants in chief important enough to be summoned to the king's council by a special writ. By the thirteenth century, these were not more than a hundred in number. The *lesser barons* were the tenants in chief, who were called to the king's councils by general writs addressed to the sheriff of each county. They ultimately became combined with the mesne tenants, to form the lesser nobility, or knighthood, which plays in mediæval history the same part as that taken by the country gentry of more modern times. Properly, a *knight* was a fully armed and mounted soldier who had been solemnly admitted to the use of arms by his older and tried comrades. The greatest kings and soldiers were proud to be dubbed knight by some famous warrior; but every landowner of a fair-sized estate was, by the thirteenth century, compelled by the king to become a knight, so that a knight often meant simply a smaller landlord.

6. The estates of the nobles and gentry were divided into

manors, which were all much of the same type. Each manor had its *lord*, who controlled all the land and exercised jurisdiction in his *manorial court* over his tenants. Sometimes the lord had special rights of jurisdiction, as, for example, the trial of criminals. In this case, he also held a *court-leet*, in which these powers were exercised. If the lord were a great man, he held many manors scattered all over England, and was in consequence seldom in residence. His *steward*, or representative, then acted on his behalf, while in any case his *baillif* looked after the details of cultivation and the management of the estate. There was probably a hall where the lord could reside with his family and servants. The land was divided into two parts. First, there was the *demesne*, or home farm of the lord, which was cultivated by his *baillif* for him, by the help of the villagers, who were compelled to work on their lord's estate for a certain number of days in the year. The rest of the manor was divided among the villagers, most of whom belonged to the *villein* class. The villeins were serfs, bound to the soil, who could not move from the estate of their lord. In some ways they were not badly off. Each had his cottage and little patch of ground, from which he could not be turned off so long as he performed the services of his lord. Though they had no luxuries, the villeins seem to have had in ordinary times plenty of meat, bread, and ale, and enough warm woollen clothing to keep out the cold. They were, however, exposed to the caprice of their lords, and, though not called upon to perform military service, were the first to suffer whenever war broke out. Though the Norman conquest increased the number of villeins, there was this compensation—that the absolute slavery which was common in early England died out during the Norman period.

7. There was little variety in the cultivation of the soil. The ploughs were heavy, and were drawn by several yoke of oxen. The old succession of corn-crops and fallow still went on. The lands tilled by the tenants were not grouped together in compact holdings, but were scattered in long narrow strips all over the manor. This was also the case with the lord's *demesne*. In most other ways the Anglo-Saxon system was continued. There was still a large extent of common land, and after harvest any tenant could still pasture his cattle on the arable fields. The farmer's object was still to raise enough corn and meat to keep himself and his family through the winter. Though trade and markets were becoming more important, there

The manorial system.

The villeins.

Manorial husbandry.

was little intercourse between various districts. The establishment of the strong Norman despotism greatly added to the happiness of the ordinary man, who could till his fields and go about his business in comparative safety.

8. Towns and trade received an immense impetus as a result of the Norman conquest. Towns not only became bigger and richer ;

Towns and trade. they ceased to be mainly the homes of husbandmen or refugees in time of war, and henceforth were centres of trade and industry. The merchants of the chief

towns formed societies called *Merchant-guilds*, and in many places the merchant-guild secured a monopoly of trade for its members, as well as virtual control of the government of the borough. The Norman trader was as restless and energetic as the Norman soldier, and since Edward the Confessor's days many Normans had settled down in English towns, and actively busied themselves in commerce. The father of St. Thomas of Canterbury was, for example, a Norman who had established himself in London and won a high position for himself in the city. After the conquest *Jews* began to take up their abode in the greater English towns, and made much profit for themselves as money-lenders. In this business the Jews had a

The Jews. practical monopoly, since the law of the Church forbade all Christians to lend money on usury. They

were unpopular, and were often cruelly persecuted. They were forced to wear a distinctive dress, and live in a special part of the town, called a *Jewry*. But they generally enjoyed the king's protection, because they could afford to pay heavily for it. Gradually they obtained special laws, courts, and recognized customs of their own. They were much richer than the Christians, and were among the first private people who built stone houses to live in.

9. Even before the conquest London was the most important town in England. From Edward the Confessor's time onward, the

London and other chief towns. court made Westminster its chief centre, and it followed from this that London gradually became a recognized capital. It received many liberties by royal charters, of

which the most important was one issued by Henry I. Its citizens took an active part in politics, and their zeal in supporting Stephen and in opposing John were especially noteworthy. Under Richard I. London obtained the right of choosing its own mayor, and was henceforth self-governing in every respect. The country towns were contented to obtain from the king charters which extended to them privileges which were already possessed by the Londoners. Conspicuous among them were York, the capital of the north ;

Exeter, the chief town of the west; Bristol, the most important port after London; and Norwich, the leading manufacturing city. Among the ports, those of the south-east coast were particularly conspicuous. They were called the *Cinque Ports*, because they were originally five in number. They formed a confederation among themselves, and showed great activity. When war arose, the ships of the Cinque Ports formed a large part of the royal navy. The most famous of them was Dover, the chief port of passage between England and the continent. As the Norman power was extended over Wales and Ireland, towns grew up for the first time in those countries under the protection of the Norman lords. Despite the great development of town life, the English were still not very energetic in commerce. What foreign trade there was remained in the hands of foreigners. It was for that reason that the Great Charter laid special stress upon protecting foreign merchants, and giving them free access to England in peace time.

10. Life was still simple, primitive, and hard. Even the king and the great nobles had no high standard of comfort. There was little money in the country, and a great man could only support his numerous train of followers by wand- Fashions of living.
 dering ceaselessly from one of his estates to another.

When the produce of one estate was eaten up, the magnate went on to the next, for it was easier for men to move about than it was for produce to be carried for long distances. Kings and nobles were thus forced to change their abode so often that it was never worth while to collect much furniture or make their dwellings comfortable. Houses were still mainly built of wood, and the castles, erected for military purposes, were cramped and dark places to live in. There was much dirt and overcrowding among most orders of society, and only the great had any chance of privacy. Men huddled together to sleep in the same room in which they lived or ate. There were few amusements, and scanty means of keeping out the cold of winter.

11. Despite these disadvantages, the Normans brought in a more refined way of living than that which had prevailed before the conquest. They cooked their food more delicately, and despised the gross feeding and heavy drinking of Food and dress.
 the English. They also brought in new methods of dress, which were especially exemplified by the profligate dandies of William Rufus's court, whose rich mantles, embroidered tunics, and long shoes, curling up to a point, were bitterly denounced by Anselm and the zealous ecclesiastics. Normans cut their hair short,

and shaved their faces, so that to the English they all looked like priests. Married women wore a wimple and veil, and dressed very much as nuns still do. Unmarried women and men went bare-headed, though in stormy weather travellers would protect themselves by low round hats. Foreign luxuries were more common than formerly, and furs were used by the wealthy of both sexes. The weapons and armour of warriors long remained similar to those used by the Normans in the battle of Hastings. By the twelfth century horses as well as men-at-arms were protected by armour. The knight's *hauberk* of chain-mail was supplemented by other trappings to protect him better from attack. The helmet, hitherto open, save for a *nasal*, protecting the nose, became an elaborate structure, closed by a grating, or *visor*, with holes for the eyes and mouth. Under the helmet was worn a skull-cap of steel, covered by a hood of mail, protecting the head and neck.

12. The towns and villages were still rude collections of wooden and mud huts, but great care was taken in the erection of castles, churches, and monasteries. The first Norman *castles* were hastily built structures of wood, raised upon a lofty artificial mound of earth, which was surrounded by a deep ditch and defended by a thick palisade. Soon stone castles began to be erected. These were of two types. In both, the defences centred round a great tower, called the *keep*. Sometimes the keep was a *high square tower* built of solid stone with walls of enormous thickness, and roofed either with wood or by vaults of stone, so that the whole area within its walls served for habitation or storage. Sometimes the keep was more lightly erected on the top of an artificial mound of earth, which was not strong enough to bear the ponderous weight of the former variety. This latter species was called the *shell-keep*, and was often hexagonal or polygonal in shape. In this the exterior wall of the tower served only as a curtain, and the buildings were roughly erected in wood or stone within its area. The *White Tower* of the Tower of London, and Rochester Castle, are famous instances of the square keep, while the keeps of Lincoln and Carisbrooke exemplify the shell-keep. In each type of castle there were exterior defences, enclosing a wide area by stone walls, high earthworks, and deep ditches filled with water. Later on, the Norman builders sometimes erected round, instead of square keeps, as, for example, at Pembroke, or at Conisborough, near Doncaster, in Yorkshire, where the huge round tower is further strengthened by buttresses, and its interior is richly fitted up and adorned. Wherever the Normans went they

built their fortresses, so that the march of Wales, even more than England, became pre-eminently a land of castles. The famous Chateau Gaillard, built by Richard I. in Normandy, was the most elaborate castle of its day see ground plan on page 135, and prepares the way for the magnificent and complicated fortresses of the thirteenth century.

13. The *Norman style of architecture*, roughly illustrated by their military buildings, attained its richer and more artistic development in the solemn and mighty churches which the piety of the new-comers erected in every part of the land. Edward the Confessor's abbey of Westminster shows that this fashion had begun before the conquest. The removal of the cathedrals from the country to the great towns, and the wonderful development of monastic life which followed the conquest, gave many opportunities for erecting Norman churches in every part of England. The nave of Durham Cathedral, completed by Ranulf Flambard, and the cathedral of Norwich, erected by bishop Herbert of Losinga, represent the earlier Norman type; while the naves of the cathedrals of Peterborough and Ely illustrate the richer Norman of the twelfth century. Both are characterized by the prevalence of the round arch and by massive solemnity of proportion, while in the later examples there is much barbaric richness of decoration. They belong to the *Romanesque* type of architecture which the Romans bequeathed to all Europe.

14. The Romanesque builders were unable to erect vaults of stone over large or high buildings. About the middle of the twelfth century successful experiments in the art of vaulting large spaces resulted in the *Gothic* style of architecture, which began to replace the Romanesque. The earliest Gothic buildings were erected in France. There was no sudden change from the old to the newer style. Gothic grew gradually out of the older Romanesque, and we can trace, especially in the buildings of Henry II.'s time, how the one style fades into the other. Examples of the transition are to be seen in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral, built by a French architect soon after the murder of St. Thomas, and in the great abbeys erected to accommodate the Cistercian and other new orders, conspicuous instances of which are the picturesque ruins of Fountains or Kirkstall in Yorkshire. In these round arches, after the Norman fashion, are found side by side with the pointed arch of the later style. The Gothic vault is largely employed, and the general structure is lighter and more masterly than that of the

Norman
churches.

The begin-
nings of
Gothic
architec-
ture.

Norman builders. When the Gothic style had attained its full proportions, the pointed arch replaced the round Norman arch. The first truly Gothic building erected in England was the choir of Lincoln Cathedral, built by its bishop, St. Hugh, at the very beginning of the thirteenth century.

15. We have already seen that a remarkable development of monastic life followed the Norman conquest. In the abbey of

New monastic movements. Battle, erected on the site of his victory over Harold, the Conqueror set a model which his followers faithfully adopted. New monasteries rose up all over the

land, and many French houses of religion received great estates in England. At first the new abbeys all followed the rule of St. Benedict. Early in the twelfth century fresh monastic types were brought from the continent into England. Conspicuous among

Cistercians. these were the *Cistercians*, or *White Monks*, who sought to save themselves from the temptations of the Bene-

dictine houses by extreme asceticism of life, by withdrawing from the haunts of man and setting up their abbeys in the wilderness, and by eschewing all pomp and ornament even in the conduct of Divine worship and the building of their habitations and churches. For this reason the Cistercian monks chose for their abodes remote districts, such as the hills of Yorkshire and the mountains of Wales. About the same time there came to England

Canons Regular. the *Canons Regular*, who, while living the life of monks, strove to do also the work of clerks, and busied themselves with teaching and preaching as well

as with meditation and prayer. Another new monastic type was that of the *Military Orders*, which were set up as the result of the Crusades. The chief of these were the knights of the Temple and the knights of St. John. These orders lived, when at peace, the

And Military Orders. life of the canons regular, but their special mission was to fight the heathen and the infidel, and in particular to defend the sepulchre of Christ from the assaults of the Mohammedans. In them the two great types of the Middle Ages, the warrior and the monk, were curiously combined. All these new orders took deep root in England, notably during the anarchy of Stephen's days, when men, despairing of this world, were fain to turn to the cloister for refuge. As a result of the monastic movement, a great religious revival arose. Even more conspicuously important than those in England were the monastic and religious movements which followed in the train of Norman influence in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. In these

lands the Norman priests and monks eradicated the last traces of the ancient independence of the Celtic churches, and brought in the Roman types of ecclesiastical life, organization, and art, for which they had already secured a paramount position in England.

16. The twelfth century saw the best results of the improvements in government and civilization and the revival of religion which followed upon the Norman conquest. The life of learning and study again became possible. At first the chief teachers and students came, like Lanfranc and Anselm, from the monasteries. Before long, however, the love of knowledge spread to secular clerks, and even to laymen. Masters or teachers collected round them bands of eager students of philosophy, philology, and literature. So numerous did these groups of teachers and students become that permanent schools grew up at various centres. Before long the teachers in each place became an organized society or corporation, with special privileges and strong position. These organized schools were called *Universities*, a word which means simply a corporation. The most famous university in the west was that of Paris, to which students flocked from every part of Europe. In the course of the reign of Henry II. an English university arose at Oxford, one of the most important towns of the south midlands. It was not, however, until the thirteenth century that the universities became fully organized and played a great part in the history of thought and learning. As time went on, even the households of kings and great nobles became centres of study and intellectual interest. Robert of Gloucester, as we have seen, did much for historical learning in his day. The court of Henry II. was a famous home of intellectual activity and literary composition.

The Twelfth Century Renaissance and the beginnings of Universities.

17. Latin was still the universal language of scholars, the clergy, and statesmen. In it all serious books were written, and all legal documents, state papers, and diplomatic correspondence drawn up. It was the everyday speech of clergy and scholars, and all lectures at the universities were given in it. Most of the best writing set forth by Englishmen was in this tongue, notably the chronicles and histories, which during the twelfth century attained a high level of thought and style, as is shown by William of Malmesbury, William of Newburgh, Roger of Hoveden, and many others. Men read the Latin classics eagerly, and based their style upon them, as was notably the case with William of Malmesbury. Even a great romancer like

Latin literature.

Geoffrey of Monmouth composed his book in Latin, and gave it out to be a serious history.

18. The English tongue was not much affected in form or vocabulary by the Norman conquest. The effect of the coming English and of the Norman was, however, that fewer books were French written in it. For example, the *English Chronicle*, literature. which had been kept up since Alfred's days in some of the great monasteries, was after the conquest continued at Peterborough only, and ceased even there by the end of the reign of Stephen. Latin was now used where English had often been employed earlier. English lost even more ground, however, as a spoken tongue than as a written language. The Normans brought French with them, and down to the thirteenth century French continued to be the ordinary vernacular speech of the court, the nobles, and the mass of the landed classes. The lighter popular literature, which was written to amuse lords and ladies, was henceforth largely composed in French also. The result was that English became the spoken language of peasants and the poor. There was no longer a literary standard, such as that which has been set at the West Saxon court, and everybody spoke and wrote in the dialect of his native district. There were *three chief dialects*, corresponding roughly to the three Anglo-Saxon great kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex. Of these, the *southern dialect* was the most like the old English of the West Saxon court. The *northern dialect* was marked by a certain number of Danish and Norwegian words. It was the beginning of the Lowland Scots of a later age, as well as of the popular dialects of the north of England. The *midland dialect* is more important to us, because it is the source of the standard English which all write and speak nowadays. In all these varieties there was a movement towards the cutting down of cases and inflexions, and the simplification of grammatical forms, so that the language—now called *Middle English*—forms a sort of bridge between the old English of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman days and the modern English which we now use.

BOOK III

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ENGLISH NATION

(1216-1399)

CHAPTER I

HENRY III. (1216-1272)

Chief dates:

- 1216. Accession of Henry III.
- 1217. Battle of Lincoln.
- 1219. Death of William Marshall.
- 1232. Fall of Hubert de Burgh.
- 1242. Battle of Malletburg.
- 1248. Simon of Montfort, governor of Gascony.
- 1258. Provisions of Oxford.
- 1259. Treaty of Paris.
- 1264. Battle of Lewes.
- 1265. Montfort's Parliament and the Battle of Evesham.
- 1267. Treaty of Shrewsbury.
- 1272. Death of Henry III.

1. JOHN'S eldest son was only nine years old at his father's death, but the dead king's friends at once proclaimed him as Henry III. Gualo, the pope's legate, procured for him the support of the Church, and showed that John's surrender to the pope was a reality by taking on himself the supreme direction of the kingdom. Gualo worked in close harmony with the leader of Henry's English partisans, William Marshall, an aged baron of unblemished honour, who had married Strongbow's daughter, and thus become earl of Pembroke and lord of Strongbow's great possessions in Wales and Ireland. Pembroke was appointed *Ruler of the King and Kingdom*, a title which was practically equivalent to that of regent. The prudent measures taken by Gualo and Pembroke soon began to increase the party of the

The conflict between William Marshall and Louis of France, 1216, 1217.

little king. The rebellious barons had taken up arms to secure the privileges contained in the Great Charter. Reversing the policy of Innocent III., Gualo now allowed Pembroke to issue a confirmation of the charter in Henry's name. This wise step cut the ground from under the feet of the partisans of Louis. Those who had hated John the most had no ill will to the monarchy, and the innocent boy on the throne was in nowise responsible for the crimes of his father. Gradually the friends of Louis fell away from him and declared for Henry. The feeling grew that it was a dangerous thing for England to be ruled by a prince who would one day be king of France; but the chief thing that weighed with the deserters was their knowledge that the pope and the Church had declared against Louis. Even Philip II. of France dared not give any help to his son, because he was afraid of provoking a quarrel with the pope. In these circumstances Louis steadily lost ground. In 1217 Marshall defeated him in a pitched battle in the

The Battle
of Lincoln,
and the
Treaty of
Lambeth,
1217.

streets of Lincoln. Later on in the year a fleet sailed from France, bringing him reinforcements; but Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar, met the French fleet off Sandwich, and utterly destroyed it. It was useless for Louis to persevere any longer. In September, 1217, he made the treaty of Lambeth with William Marshall, by which he agreed to leave England. No sooner had he gone than Magna Carta was once more reissued, in what was substantially its permanent form. Besides this, a *Forest Charter* was also published by the king, which mitigated the severity of Henry II.'s Assize of Woodstock, and laid down the great principle that no man was to lose life or limb for breach of the forest laws.

2. William Marshall continued to rule England till his death in 1219. He had put an end to the civil war and restored the

The rule
of William
Marshall,
1216-1219,
and Hubert
de Burgh,
1219-1232.

monarchy, but he did not venture to interfere with the supremacy of the pope, and was much hampered by the fact that he was obliged to trust the greedy foreigners who had been the chief supporters of John. On his death no new regent was appointed. At first the pope's legate practically acted as regent. The legate was now that Pandulf who had received John's submission in 1213. His constant interference in the details of government provoked much resentment in England, and at last Archbishop Langton went to Rome and persuaded the pope to recall him. From that time there was no regular papal legate in England, save

the archbishop of Canterbury himself. Langton henceforward did his best to restore peace and prosperity to England, and worked well with Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar, who, after Pandulf's recall, was the chief ruler of England. Hubert was a capable and vigorous man; he made it his chief object to restore the system of strong rule which had prevailed under Henry II. Many difficulties stood in his way. During the long civil war the feudal party had revived, and Hubert, like Henry II., at his accession was obliged to put down adulterine castles and compel the nobles to obey the law. An even graver trouble arose from John's foreign friends. The chief of these were Peter des Roches, a native of Poitou, who was bishop of Winchester, and a mercenary soldier, Falkes of Bréauté, who had fought John's battles so well that the late king had given him enormous territories. In 1224 Falkes rose in revolt, but Hubert captured and destroyed his chief castle at Bedford and drove him into exile. With the fall of Falkes the reign of the foreigners was over, and the government of England again fell into English hands. Disgusted with his rival's success, Peter des Roches left England to go on crusade.

3. In 1227 the pope declared that Henry was old enough to govern his kingdom; and Langton died in 1228. Hubert continued to act as justiciar till 1232; but his severity raised up a host of enemies against him, and he gradually lost the support of the young king. At last Peter des Roches returned to England, and cleverly brought about his fall. Henry dismissed the faithful Hubert, and persecuted him with much ingratitude. Peter des Roches succeeded Hubert as justiciar, but held power for only two years. He gave the chief offices of the state to his friends and kinsfolk from Poitou, and soon excited the bitterest indignation among the English barons. Richard Marshall, earl of Pembroke, the son of the late regent, made himself the spokesman of the barons' discontent, and finally headed a revolt against the justiciar. Peter maliciously revenged himself by stirring up a rebellion against Richard in his Irish estates. Richard was forced to go to Ireland, where he was treacherously slain; but Henry was horrified when he heard of the justiciar's deceit, and was easily persuaded by Edmund Rich, a saintly scholar who had just become archbishop of Canterbury, to drive Peter and his Poitevins from office.

The fall of
Hubert,
1232, and
the rule
of Peter
des Roches,
1232-1234.

4. With the fall of the bishop of Winchester, the first period of Henry III.'s reign comes to an end. During all these years Henry had been either a minor or under the control of one powerful

mind which he could not easily resist. For eighteen years, then, the personal authority of the king was small. This circumstance helped to spread the notion of a limited monarchy, Growth of limited monarchy. with which was combined the view that the natural helpers and advisers of the crown were the great barons who sat in the royal council. We already seem far away from the Angevin despotism. Though the charters were often broken in their details, the spirit of them had begun to enter into English political life.

5. With the fall of Peter des Roches, Henry III. personally undertook the government of the country. The king was resolved that henceforth he would submit to no master. He would be his own prime minister, holding in his own hands all the strings of policy, and acting through subordinates, whose duty was to carry out their master's orders. Under such a system the justiciarship practically ceased to exist, for Des Roches's successor, Stephen Segrave, was a mere lawyer who never aspired to be chief minister. Before long the justiciar had become a simple president of the law courts. Unluckily, Henry III. was not hard-working or possessed of sufficient strength of will to rule England effectively. He possessed, indeed, some noble and many attractive qualities; his private life was pure; his piety was sincere; he was well educated and loved fair churches, beautiful sculpture, and richly illuminated books. Born and brought up in England, he was proud of his English ancestors, was devoted to English saints, and gave his children English names like Edward and Edmund. Nevertheless, Henry showed less sympathy with English ways than many of his foreign predecessors. Too feeble to act for himself, too suspicious to trust his barons, he leant upon the support of foreign favourites and kinsmen. From 1234 to 1258 he sought to rule England through foreign dependants. The work of Hubert seemed altogether undone when swarm after swarm of aliens came from abroad, and obtained place and power beyond their deserts through the weak complacency of the king.

6. The new alien invasion began soon after Henry's marriage in 1236 with Eleanor, daughter of the count of Provence and sister to Margaret, wife of Louis IX., who in 1226 succeeded his father, Louis VIII., the sometime invader of England, to the French throne. Eleanor's mother was a daughter of the count of Savoy, and her numerous Savoyard uncles, having but a slender endowment in their own

mountain land, made their way to England to share King Henry's bounty. It soon became known that Henry was willing to welcome any attractive foreign adventurer of high birth, and many such flocked to the land of promise. Among them was Simon of Montfort, son of a famous Simon of Montfort who had been a chief instrument in extending North French and orthodox influence over the heretical *Albigenses* of southern France, and who had won for himself by his sword the county of Toulouse, and quickly lost it again. From his mother the elder Simon inherited a claim of the earldom of Leicester. The younger Simon persuaded his brothers to make over their pretensions to him, and went to England to demand the Leicester titles and estates. Henry recognized Simon as earl of Leicester, married him to his sister, and lavished on him many marks of favour.

THE PROVENÇALS AND SAVOYARDS

Amadeus,
count of Savoy.

Beaunce,
m. Raymond Berengar,
count of Provence.

Boniface of Savoy,
archbishop of
Canterbury.

Other sons and
daughters.

Margaret,
m. Louis ix.,
king of France
Philip III. of
France.

Eleanor,
m. Henry III.
of England.
Edward I.

Sanchia.
m. Richard of
Cornwall, king
of the Romans.

Beatrice,
m. Charles of
Anjou, king
of Sicily.

7. Another foreign element that weighed with increasing force on England was the power of the pope. The successors of Innocent III. pressed still further the exalted claims of their predecessor. They declared that it was their right to appoint their nominees to any bishopric or benefice. At their caprice they issued what were called *papal provisions*, by which the rights of electors, or patrons, were put aside in favour of the pope's nominee. The result of this was that a swarm of Italian and French priests were established by the pope in English benefices, and grew rich on the spoils of the English Church without attempting to do the work of their offices. Besides this, the pope claimed the right of taxing the Church at his will. About this time papal taxation became more severe on account of a quarrel which broke out between Pope Gregory IX. and the Emperor

The
Romans.

Frederick II. Frederick II., the son of Henry VI., had been made emperor by Innocent III., after the fall of Otto IV. He was now waging deadly war against the papacy, and Gregory looked upon the English Church as a sure source of supplies to equip armies to fight the emperor. Though Henry had married his sister to Frederick II., and was on friendly terms with him, he dared not resist the pope's demands. Things became worse in 1237, when the pope sent to England the first legate despatched from Rome since the days of Pandulf. This legate, a cardinal named Otto, made himself unpopular both by his strictness in reforming abuses and by the zeal with which he furthered his master's interests. In 1238 he visited Oxford, where a great school or university had recently sprung up. An affray broke out between the legate and the scholars, and the latter forced the pope's representative to take refuge in a church steeple until the king could send soldiers to effect his release. At last Otto went back to Rome, leaving very bitter memories behind him.

8. The gentle Archbishop Edmund did all that he could to save the clergy from the exactions of pope and king. Though high-minded and well-meaning, he was not strong enough Edmund
Rich and to grapple with the difficult task before him. In 1240 Robert
Grosseteste. he left England in disgust, and soon afterwards died abroad. His reputation for holiness was such that he was soon canonized as St. Edmund. His successor at Canterbury was a man of very different stamp. The new archbishop was Boniface of Savoy, one of the queen's uncles. He owed his office entirely to the favour of the king and pope, and made no effort to protect the clergy from them. In these circumstances the leadership of the clergy passed to Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, a famous writer, a saintly man, and the most practical reformer of Church abuses of his day. Innocent IV., Gregory IX.'s successor, made even severer demands on England than his predecessor. In 1245 he deposed Frederick from the empire, and persecuted him relentlessly till his death in 1250. Frederick was the last of the great emperors of the Middle Ages, and his fall marked the end of the long struggle between papacy and empire, which began with the investiture contest between Gregory VII. and Henry IV. Grosseteste continued his protest, and even ventured to withstand Innocent IV. face to face. Nothing, however, came from his complaints. However much the clergy grumbled, Henry gave them no help, and they were forced to pay whatever the pope exacted.

9. As Henry III. grew older he felt the disgrace of his father's failure to retain the Angevin Empire abroad. In 1230 he led an expedition to recover Poitou, but obtained nothing by his attempt. In 1242 he again went in person to prosecute his rights to the Angevin inheritance which was fast slipping away owing to the growing power of Louis IX. The French monarch was a high-minded and conscientious king, as wise as he was good, and so universally admired and beloved that after his death he was canonized as St. Louis. But he was anxious to extend his authority and complete the work of his grandfather, Philip II. With this object Louis made one of his brothers count of Poitou and of Toulouse, and thus threatened the last hopes of Henry in Poitou. But the barons of Poitou were even more afraid of the growth of the French power than was the English king, and now turned to Henry and besought him to save them from French domination. At their head was Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche, the mighty Poitevin baron, whose rage at John's abduction of Isabella of Angoulême had given the signal for the conquests of Philip II. Hugh of La Marche was now Henry III.'s step-father, for on John's death Isabella had gone back to France and married her old lover. She added her appeals to those of her second husband, and Henry, always dutiful to his family, willingly listened to his mother's entreaties. But when Henry got to Poitou, he found that Hugh and Isabella had no real care for his interests, and simply used him as a tool to prosecute their grievances against the French king. He learnt how impossible it was to build upon Poitevin promises. The army of Louis IX. defeated his troops at *Taillebourg*, near Saintes, and drove him in panic flight to Bordeaux. The expedition was an utter failure, and henceforth Louis's brother ruled Poitou as he would. On his death Poitou became part of the direct domains of the French king.

10. The chief result of the expedition was the ruin of the house of Lusignan. The numerous children of Hugh and Isabella, finding that they had no prospects in France, crossed over the Channel and threw themselves on the bounty of their half-brother. Henry welcomed them warmly, and loaded them with grants and presents. He married one of them, William of Valence, to the heiress of the Marshalls, earls of Pembroke, whose house had recently died out in the male line. Another brother, Aymer, a violent and incompetent man, became bishop of Winchester. Henry's half-sisters found husbands among the richest of the earls. Henceforth the Poitevin half-brothers of the king

rivalled the Savoyard uncles of the queen in wealth, pride, and unpopularity.

11. The government of England by Henry and his foreign friends was not only expensive and unpopular, but weak and ineffective. Though the people paid heavy taxes, good order was not maintained. Under a feeble king like Henry, the princes of North Wales became very powerful, and extended their power to the south at the expense of the lords marcher. Since the days of Griffith ap Llewelyn no Welsh prince had been as mighty as Llewelyn ap Iorwerth. He joined with the barons in wresting Magna Carta from John, and took advantage of the troubles of Henry's minority to push his dominions from the Dovey to Carmarthen Bay. Though married to Henry's sister, he was constantly at war with his brother-in-law. Under his grandson, Llewelyn ap Griffith, who became prince in 1246, the Welsh principality became even stronger.

12. Henry's remaining dominions in France were, like Wales, slipping away from his control. All that now remained of the inheritance of Eleanor of Aquitaine was Gascony, but even in Gascony Henry's power was very small. The nobles behaved like independent princes, and great towns like Bordeaux were becoming little republics which cared nothing for the commands of their duke. Things got to such a pass that even Henry saw that something had to be done. In 1248 he made his brother-in-law, Simon of Montfort, governor, or seneschal, of Gascony, and gave him full power to reduce the unruly Gascons to obedience. Simon threw himself into the rude task with wonderful ability and energy. He restored order, but showed little regard for impartiality or justice. The Gascons sent piteous complaints against him to England. Henry listened to their murmurs, and gradually withdrew his confidence from Simon. Profoundly irritated at this shabby treatment, Simon resigned his office in disgust in 1252. Henceforward he became Henry's bitter enemy. Returning to England, he put himself at the head of the opposition which the king's fatuous government had created.

13. For many years many protests had been raised against Henry's misrule, but, for want of competent leaders, nothing had come out of these efforts. For a time Henry's younger brother, Richard, earl of Cornwall, had led the baronial opposition; but Richard now married Sanchia of Provence, the queen's younger sister, and reconciled himself with the court. The failure of all

attempts to check him encouraged Henry to adopt a more adventurous policy. His children were growing up, and he wished to establish them in life. To his elder son, Edward, he made over the earldom of Chester which had recently lapsed to the king's hands, all his lands in Wales, and the duchy of Gascony. Edmund, his second son, was still unprovided for, and Henry eagerly grasped at a chance of establishing him in a foreign kingdom which the pope now offered. After the death of Frederick II., the popes continued to wage unrelenting war against his children. They were particularly anxious to prevent the kingdom of Sicily, which Frederick had ruled, remaining united with Germany and the empire. Accordingly the pope offered to make Edmund king of Sicily, and Henry greedily swallowed the tempting bait. Edmund, who was a mere boy, remained in England, but Henry allowed the pope to wage war in Sicily in Edmund's name, and promised to defray the expenses. This was not the only foreign kingdom which Henry's kinsfolk obtained. In 1257 Richard of Cornwall was elected emperor after the death of Frederick II.'s son. His title was disputed, and as he was never crowned by the pope, he was called king of the Romans.

Edmund,
king of
Sicily; and
Richard,
king of
the Romans.

14. Each new adventure of Henry and the pope imposed a fresh burden upon Englishmen. The taxes became heavier, and the king's misgovernment steadily became worse. Henry's misrule was the more grievous, since England in other ways was full of life and progress. It was the time of the great religious revival which saw the establishment of the *Mendicant Friars*, whose two chief orders, the *Dominicans* and the *Franciscans*, came to England in 1221 and 1224. It was a time of remarkable intellectual progress, of the growth of the *universities*, where flourished many famous scholars, philosophers, and theologians. It was the time when mediæval art attained its highest development in the growth of Gothic architecture. The country was becoming increasingly wealthy through the spread of manufactures and *commerce*, and towns and town life became more important than they had ever been before. It was now also that English *national sentiment* was becoming conscious of itself. In every direction there was rapid progress, but political progress was stayed by the incompetence of the king and his advisers. But the day of reckoning was now at hand. Led by Earl Simon, the barons at last knew what they wanted. In 1258 the storm of indignation

Political re-
trogression
and
national
progress.

burst, and drove Henry and his favourites from the position which they had so long misused.

15. The crisis was hastened by the enormous demands of the pope for the prosecution of the war waged for Sicily in Edmund's name. Henry could only satisfy the pope by raising fresh taxes, and to do this he had to obtain the consent of the barons. In a council, or as it was now called, a *parliament*, at Westminster, the barons utterly refused to give the king any money, and forced him to consent to a drastic reform of the government. In June a second parliament met at Oxford. Taking advantage of a summons for an expedition against the Welsh, the barons came arrayed for war and attended by their armed followers. The king's friends called this assembly the *Mad Parliament*, but the barons knew very well what they were doing. A committee of twenty-four, chosen in equal proportions by king and barons, laid before the Oxford parliament an elaborate scheme for the future government of the realm. The new constitution was called the *Provisions of Oxford*, and readily adopted by the barons. By it a standing *council of fifteen* was established, by whose advice and consent Henry was henceforth to exercise all his authority. All aliens were to be expelled from office and new ministers were appointed under stringent conditions. To save the barons the expense of attending frequent parliaments, a body of twelve was appointed to represent the whole nobility. This was to meet three times a year and to discuss public affairs with the committee of fifteen.

16. The Provisions of Oxford carried to a still further point the idea of limited and constitutional monarchy first expressed in the Great Charter. Every royal power was to remain unimpaired, but henceforth it was to be exercised not by the king in person, but by a committee of the barons. The feudal tradition, when each baron's dearest wish was to break down the monarchy and reign like a king over his own lands, was thus quite forgotten. The scheme was quite effective to check the autocracy of the crown. The danger was lest it should set up in the place of the Angevin despotism a narrow baronial oligarchy, as careless as the king had been of the welfare of the country as a whole. There was no time, however, to think of future dangers at the moment. Headed by William of Valence, the king's half-brother, the foreigners steadily resisted the new scheme. They were soon overpowered and driven into exile. Henry and his eldest son were forced to take oaths to observe the

Provisions. Next year, when King Richard came back to England, he was not allowed to land until he took the same oath. Thus the fifteen triumphed over all opposition. Henceforth they, and not Henry, were the real rulers of England.

17. One result of the baronial victory was the abandonment of Henry's ambitious schemes of foreign domination. His son Edmund renounced his phantom kingdom of Sicily, The Treaty and the pope found a more competent instrument for of Paris, his purpose in Charles of Anjou, a younger brother 1259. of Louis IX. Charles, who had married the youngest sister of Queen Eleanor, had already won for himself her father's county of Provence. In 1265 he established himself in Naples and Sicily, and was the ancestor of a long line of kings ruling over southern Italy under the pope's supremacy. In 1259 Henry went to Paris, where he concluded a permanent peace with the king of France. By this *treaty of Paris* he renounced all his claims over Normandy, Anjou, and Poitou, retaining only the Channel Islands, a fragment of the Norman duchy, over which the English kings still ruled because they were stronger by sea than the French. Besides this, Henry agreed to perform homage to Louis for the duchy of Gascony, which remained under its English dukes. Louis was so anxious to make peace that he voluntarily handed over to Henry some parts of Gascony which were actually in his possession and also paid him a considerable sum of money, nominally to equip knights to fight on a crusade. This treaty was the first peace made between England and France since Philip II.'s conquest of Normandy. It failed, however, to establish permanent friendship between the two countries. So long as Gascony remained ruled by dukes who were also English kings, real cordiality between them was impossible.

18. In England the fifteen ruled for some years in Henry's name, but they governed in such a selfish and narrow way that murmurs, almost as loud as the old outcry against Henry, arose against them. Earl Simon of Leicester took broader views than most of the barons, but he found it very difficult to make the other nobles accept his policy. After all he was a newcomer and a foreigner, and with all his greatness he was so masterful and overbearing that he was not easy to work with. The majority of the barons deserted his leadership for that of Richard of Clare, earl of Gloucester, the most powerful of the earls of English birth. Gloucester was a much less able man than Simon, and looked with suspicion upon his rival. From their disputes arose a division

The break-up of parties and the beginning of the Barons' War, 1259-1263.

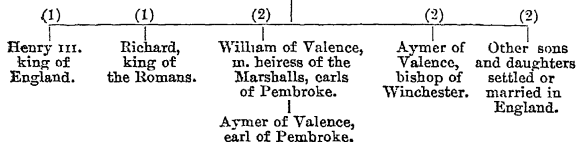
in the baronial ranks, which gave Henry III. a good chance to win back power. Henry himself was not clear-sighted enough to make the most of his opportunities; but Edward, his eldest son, now a grown man, did much to compensate for his father's weakness. The king's son put himself at the head of a popular royalist party, and showed himself more disposed to trust the people than Gloucester. It was plain that he had no sympathy with Henry's past misdeeds, and that under him there would be no danger of the domination of foreign favourites. In fact, Edward stood to the royalist party as his uncle Leicester stood to the baronial oligarchy. For a time Edward and Simon worked well together, but they were too much like each other to agree long. Ultimately Edward proved himself Simon's most deadly enemy. He persuaded many of the barons to desert to the royalist side, and in particular won over from the opposition the fierce and warlike lords of the Welsh March, of whom, as earl of Chester, he was the natural leader. By 1263 the royalist party had become so strong that Henry repudiated the Provisions, and shook himself free of the control of the fifteen. He persuaded the pope to annul the Provisions, and absolve him from the oath which he had taken to observe them. This growth of the royalist power forced the barons to unite again, and their reunion was easier since Earl Richard of Gloucester died, and his young son, Earl Gilbert of Gloucester, was a devoted follower of Montfort. Open hostilities broke out between the king and the barons, which were called the *Barons' War*. In this struggle both parties were so evenly matched that neither could obtain a victory over the other. The best way out of an impossible situation seemed to be to appeal to the arbitration of some impartial outsider. Accordingly, in December, 1263, the two parties arranged to submit all disputes between them to the judgment of Louis IX.

THE HOUSE OF LUSIGNAN

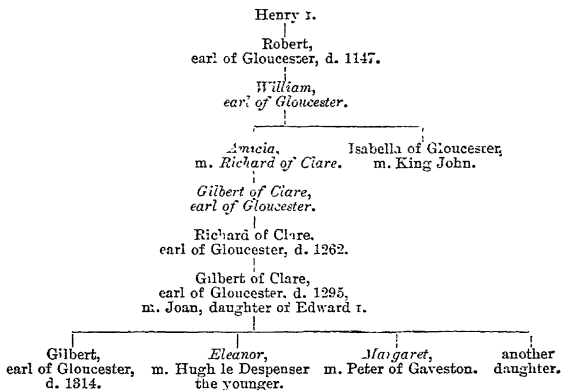
Isabella of Angoulême.

m. (1) John, King of England.

(2) Hugh of Lusignan, count
of La Marche.



THE EARLS OF GLOUCESTER



The names in *italics* are not referred to in the text.

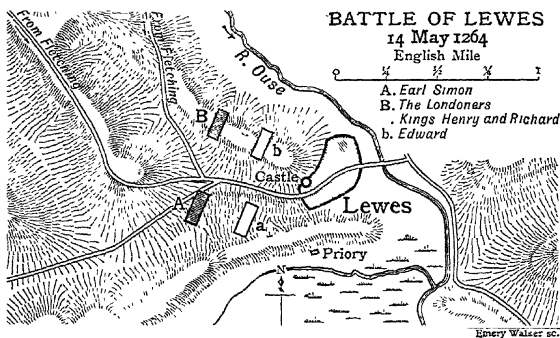
19. The king of France was the justest of kings; but, after all, he was a king, and naturally prejudiced in favour of a sovereign waging war against his subjects. In January, 1264, he issued his decision in a document called the *Mise of Amiens*, which pronounced the Provisions invalid, mainly because the pope had already condemned them. The failure of the Mise of Amiens. 1264.

This judgment was too one-sided to be accepted, and the barons, headed by Leicester, resolved to continue the war. In taking this step Simon deliberately broke his pledged word, but he was not more forsworn than the king, who had so solemnly promised to abide by the Provisions. Though deserted by many of his followers, Simon did not lose heart. The defection of his allies gave him almost uncontrolled power over the baronial party, and he now showed himself as good a general as he had been a statesman. War was renewed, and at first the royalists gained some successes. At the head of their victorious troops, Henry and Edward marched triumphantly through Kent and Sussex, and at last took up their quarters at *Lewes*, where, on May 14, the decisive battle of the campaign was fought.

20. The royalist army was holding the town of Lewes, which is situated on a sort of peninsula on the right bank of the river Ouse.

The Battle of Lewes, 1264. Early in the morning, Montfort's army advanced from the north and made their way over the open chalk-downs which encompassed Lewes on three sides.

Simon's hope was to surprise the royalists in their camp, but they obtained information of his approach, and swarmed out of the town to meet him. The baronial troops moved in two great divisions along two spurs of the downs, separated by a valley. Their best soldiers were on the right wing, and their left wing largely consisted of the Londoners, who were ardent partisans of Earl Simon. Edward, who commanded the right wing of the royalists, attacked the Londoners with such fury that he drove



them in confusion many miles from the field. During his absence, however, Montfort with his right wing had captured Lewes town, utterly defeated the king's troops, and taken prisoners Henry and his brother, the king of the Romans. When Edward returned from the pursuit it was too late to renew the conflict. Next day the king's son surrendered, so that the barons won a complete triumph.

21. The victors drew up a new plan for the government of the country, called the *Mise of Lewes*. By it the king's power was

The rule of Earl Simon, 1264-1265. handed over to a committee of nine, and Henry and Edward were forced to swear to observe its provisions. In reality, however, Montfort now governed England.

His position was much stronger than it had been in the early years of the struggle, and for the first time he was able

to enforce his policy upon all his party. His position, however, was still very difficult. The lords of the Welsh March were still in arms for the king, and the pope was Henry's warm partisan. Queen Eleanor and her kinsfolk assembled an army on the French coast, and waited for an opportunity of invading England.

22. Montfort saw that the best way of resisting the formidable forces opposed to him was to call upon the people as a whole to rally round him. With this object he summoned, in January, 1265, a parliament which, unlike the parliament of 1258, was not a mere council of barons. He called upon every shire, city, and borough in England to elect two representatives who were to join with the barons and bishops in their deliberations. This action of Montfort's has made the *Parliament of 1265* very famous in our history. It has been called the *first House of Commons*, and Montfort has been named the *creator of the House of Commons*. Neither of these claims can be justified. It was no new thing to call upon the shires to send their representatives to treat with the king or his ministers. The policy of electing representatives of the shires began when Henry II. instituted the system of grand juries, and sent his justices to transact business with them. It was only a small step forward when, instead of the king's representative dealing with each shire in turn, representatives of all the shires were joined together in a single assembly, and brought face to face with the king in person. This was first done, so far as we know, under John in 1213. Under Henry III. it became a common custom for the king to call together such representatives, or, as they were called, *knights of the shire*, and to take their advice or listen to their complaints. Moreover, when the king wanted to get money from the merchants, or advice on matters of trade, he had already more than once summoned representatives of the cities and boroughs. Nevertheless, Montfort's Parliament does mark a real advance. It was a new thing to join both the shire and borough representatives in a single gathering. Moreover, Montfort did not summon this parliament merely to raise taxes, and to discuss matters of little importance. His object was to take the people into partnership with him, and find out their real views as to the government of the country. Thus, while the barons of 1258 acted as if none but the magnates had any voice in matters of politics, Montfort allowed commons as well as lords a voice in high matters of state. Since Magna Carta the king's power had been limited. It was the glory of Montfort that he was the first man to see that the power of the crown should

be controlled, not only by the barons and bishops, but also by the lesser land-owners, the men of business, and the smaller people as well. Nevertheless, Montfort's Parliament was but the expedient of the moment. We must wait for the next reign before the rival and disciple of Montfort, Edward, the king's son, established the popular element on a firm basis.

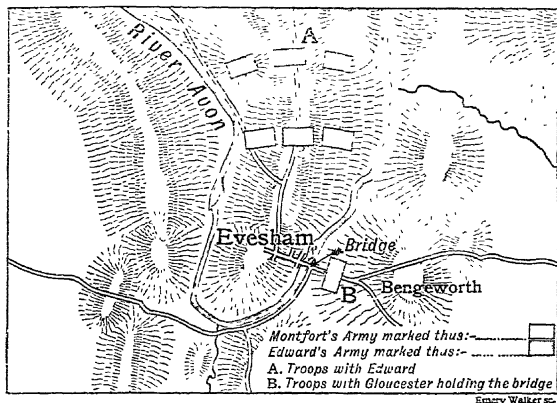
23. Earl Simon's rule lasted only a few months. His fierce and overbearing temper, and the deep differences of policy between him and such of the magnates as still adhered to him, made permanent co-operation between him and the barons impossible. Gilbert of Clare was now old enough to shake off the fascination which had bound him to Simon in earlier years. He quarrelled first with Simon's sons, who had all the defects and little of the greatness of their father. Then he broke violently with Simon himself, and raised the standard of revolt in his lordship of Glamorgan. The marchers, whom Simon had never been able to subdue, rallied round him, and Simon was forced to proceed to the west to wage war against Gloucester and his friends. He took with him Henry and Edward, both of whom were still practically prisoners. One day, however, Edward, who was allowed the diversion of hunting, escaped from his guards and joined Gloucester. By this time a strong band of exiles, headed by William of Valence, had landed in South Wales and added their forces to those of Edward and Gloucester. Simon strove to create a diversion by making a close alliance with Llewelyn of Wales, but the Welsh prince gave him little real help. Llewelyn had already profited by the civil war to conquer many of the lordships marcher, and he would not stop adding to his territories to fight Montfort's battles. Before long Montfort was forced to recross the Severn, closely followed by Edward and the marchers. On August 4, 1265, a decisive battle was fought at *Evesham* in Worcestershire.

24. Evesham, like Lewes, stands on a peninsula, and is almost encircled by a wide curve of the Avon. Simon and his war-worn host were resting in the town when Edward occupied the narrow neck of land which lies a little to the north between the two reaches of the stream. This cut off all prospect of escape by land, especially as Gloucester with a strong force occupied the village of Bengeworth on the left bank, which was connected with Evesham by the only bridge on that part of the river. Simon saw that Edward had outgeneralled him, yet could not but admire his adversary's skill in warfare. "By the arm of St. James," he declared, "they come on cunningly; yet it

The revolt
of the
Marchers,
1265.

The Battle
of Evesham,
1265.

is from me that they have learnt their order of battle. God have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are the lord Edward's." The battle then began, and Montfort's troops, though fighting bravely, were overpowered. Montfort himself perished in the fight, but his memory lived long in the hearts of Englishmen, who worshipped him as a saint and martyr, and believed that he had laid down his



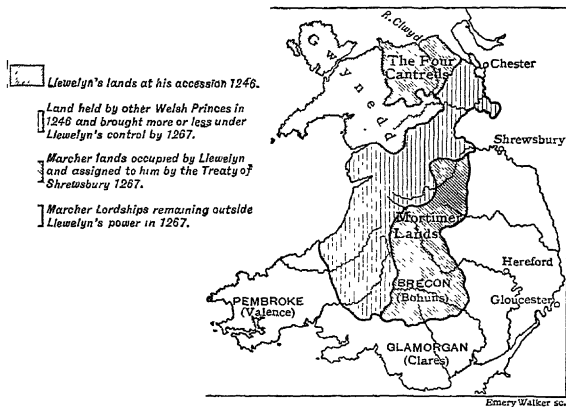
BATTLE OF EVESHAM.

life for the cause of justice and religion. The best of Simon's work survived the battle of Evesham. His victorious nephew learnt well the lesson of his career, and the true successor of the martyred earl was the future Edward I.

25. Edward now restored his father to liberty and the throne. There was a greedy scramble for the spoils of victory, and the greatest of these, the forfeited earldom of Leicester, The Royalist went to Edmund, the king's younger son, who soon Restoration, also became earl of Lancaster and Derby. But the 1265-1267. victors' resolve to deprive their beaten foes of their estates drove the vanquished into fresh revolts, and for two years there was still much fighting in England. At last the chief rebels were forced to defend themselves behind the strong walls of Kenilworth Castle. There were two parties among the royalists; one, led by the cruel marchers, thought of nothing but spoils and vengeance, while the

other, headed by Gloucester, recommended moderation in victory. At first Edward favoured the former, but he now adopted Gloucester's milder policy, and drew up the *Dictum de Kenilworth*, which allowed rebels to redeem their estates by paying a fine assessed at five years' value of their lands. In 1266 the defenders of Kenilworth were admitted to these terms, and in 1267 a few desperate partisans, who still held their own amidst the fens of the Isle of Ely, were also forced into submission.

26. England was thus restored to peace, but Llewelyn ap Griffith still remained under arms. Even Edward was now tired of fighting. and in September, 1267, gave Llewelyn liberal terms of peace in the *treaty of Shrewsbury*. By it Llewelyn was recognized as prince of Wales, and as overlord of all the Welsh magnates. Many of his conquests were definitely



WALES AND THE MARCH, SHEWING THE GROWTH OF THE POWER OF LLEWELYN (1246-1267).

ceded to him, including the four cantreds of the vale of Clwyd, over which Edward himself had claims. Alone of Montfort's friends, Llewelyn came out of an unsuccessful struggle upon terms which are seldom obtained even by a victor in the field.

27. The rest of Henry III.'s reign was as peaceful as the middle part had been stormy. The old king was practically replaced by

his wise son, and Edward was shrewd enough to rule the land after a fashion more in accordance with the ideas of Earl Simon than with those of his father. Before long things became so quiet that Edward was able to leave England and go on a crusade. Ever since the Third Crusade the Christian kingdom in Palestine had been steadily decaying, and it was clear that unless a new holy war were preached, it would soon be completely overwhelmed. Louis IX. undertook to lead a crusade in person, but instead of going to the Holy Land, he turned his arms against Tunis, where he died in 1270. Soon afterwards Edward arrived off Tunis, only to find that Louis was dead, and his son, Philip III., had concluded a truce with the Mohammedans. Disgusted by what he regarded as treason to Christendom, he made his way to Palestine, where he remained till 1272. He was the last of the great crusaders, and even his fire and courage could do little to uphold the crusading kingdom, which a few years later was altogether destroyed. Edward was still away in the East when Henry III. died, in November, 1272. The old king was buried in Westminster Abbey, which he had rebuilt in honour of St. Edward, his favourite saint. During his lifetime the old Norman despotism had faded slowly into the national and constitutional monarchy which Simon had begun, and which Simon's conqueror was soon to complete.

CHAPTER II

EDWARD I. (1272-1307)

Chief Dates :

1272.	Accession of Edward I.
1274.	Edward's coronation.
1277.	The first Welsh War.
1279.	Statute of Mortmain.
1282-1283.	Conquest of North Wales.
1285.	Statutes <i>De Donis</i> and of Winchester.
1290.	Statute <i>Quia Emptores</i> .
1292.	John Balliol, king of Scots.
1295.	The Model Parliament.
1296.	First conquest of Scotland.
1297.	<i>Confirmatio Cartarum</i> .
1298.	Battle of Falkirk.
1303-1304.	Completion of second conquest of Scotland
1306.	Revolt of Robert Bruce.
1307.	Death of Edward I.

1. EDWARD I. was thirty-three years old when he became king, and the broad lines of his policy had already been formed in the rude school of the Barons' War. He was wise enough to profit by his experience, and his love of strong rule and policy of Edward I. and efficiency, his courage, energy, and honesty stand in strong contrast to the weakness and incompetence of his father. Edward loved power too much to part with it willingly, but he saw that if he wished to be a successful ruler, he must make his policy popular. For this reason he strove to carry out the great idea of Earl Simon of taking the people into a sort of partnership with him. The result was that his people trusted and followed him. Edward found that he could thus get more of his own way than by constantly wrangling with his subjects. His remarkable personal gifts made it easy for him to win respect and love. He was of elegant build and lofty stature, an eloquent speaker, a consummate swordsman, and a mighty hunter. He was hot-tempered and passionate, and when moved to wrath was sometimes hard and almost cruel. He committed many deeds of violence in his youth,

but he learned to curb his impetuous temper. was proud of his straightforwardness, and boasted that he always kept his word. Yet Edward had a curious narrowness of temper, which made him sometimes look at the letter rather than the spirit of his promises. An enemy said of him that he called prudence the treachery whereby he advanced, and believed that whatever he liked was lawful. He was hard-working, clear-headed, and practical. His family life was unstained. He was a loyal friend, and was sincerely religious. With all his faults he was the greatest of all his house.

2. Edward was proclaimed king during his absence. A regency was appointed whose chief members were Walter Grey, archbishop of York, and Robert Burnell, a Shropshire clerk, who was already the new king's most intimate confidant, The Government during Edward's absence, 1272-1274. and did so well that he remained for the rest of his life Edward's chief minister. It kept England in such unbroken peace that there was no need for

Edward to hasten his return. He tarried for more than a year in France, and paid a prolonged visit to Gascony. At last, in August, 1274, he crossed over to England, and was crowned king.

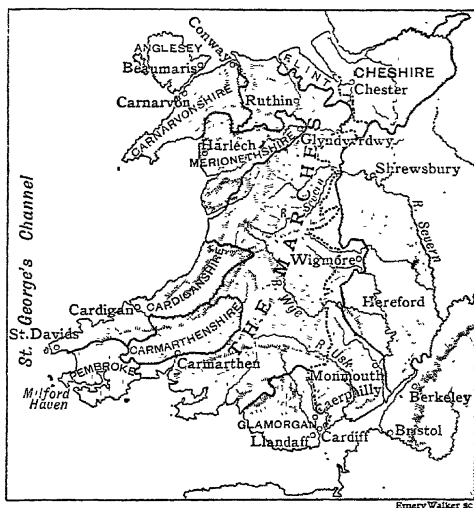
3. Edward's first trouble came from Wales, where the treaty of Shrewsbury had not brought enduring peace. The brilliant success of the Welsh arms and diplomacy seems somewhat to The first Welsh war, 1277. have turned Llewelyn's brain. Visions of a wider authority constantly floated before the Welsh prince,

and he dreamed of driving the Saxons out of Wales and making himself an independent ruler. Accordingly, when the regents of the new king required him to take an oath of fealty to Edward, he answered them with all sorts of pretexts and delays. There were many other subjects of contention, and both English and Welsh complained that the treaty of Shrewsbury had not been properly executed. Even after Edward's return Llewelyn continued to evade the performance of his feudal duty. At last he declared that he dared not leave Wales to perform homage unless Edward sent his brother, Earl Edmund of Lancaster, to Wales as a hostage for his safety. Llewelyn also strove to stir up dissension in Edward's realm by posing as the disciple of Simon of Montfort, and in 1275 sought for Montfort's daughter Eleanor as his wife. However, on her way to Wales Eleanor was captured by Edward's sailors, and kept in restraint at court. Edward at last lost all patience, and in 1277 led an army to North Wales, blockaded Llewelyn in Snowdon, and forced him to make his submission by the *treaty of Conway*. This treaty deprived Llewelyn of all that

last he was tracked and captured. In October, 1283, he was executed as a traitor at Shrewsbury. This was the end of the native principality of Wales. It is often called the conquest of Wales, but it was in reality only the conquest of Llewelyn's principality. The marches of Wales remained under their feudal lords until the sixteenth century.

The Conquest of the Principality, 1282-1283.

6. In 1284 Edward drew up the *Statute of Wales*. He declared



- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| The Principality | The smaller marcher lordships |
| The Palatine counties | English shire ground |

Modern boundary between England & Wales -----

WALES AND THE MARCH BETWEEN THE CONQUEST UNDER EDWARD I.
AND THE UNION UNDER HENRY VIII.

that the principality of Wales, hitherto feudally subject to him, was henceforward to be directly ruled by him, and drew up a scheme for its future government. He divided it into five counties—Anglesey, Carnarvon, Merioneth, Cardigan, and Carmarthen

—and added a new county, Flintshire, to the earldom of Chester, which was now permanently in the king's hands. In each of the new shires the English system of local government was set up, though such Welsh laws as Edward thought reasonable were allowed to continue. In all the details of the settlement Edward strove to deal fairly with the Welsh, though he never understood them well enough to respect their feelings. To secure his conquest Edward surrounded Snowdon with a ring of fortresses, which still, in their ruin, bear witness to the solidity of their work. Round each castle, such as Carnarvon and Conway, grew up a little English town whose inhabitants might help the soldiers of the castle to keep the Welsh in check. In one of Edward's new strongholds, that of Carnarvon, his son, the future Edward II., was born. In 1301 this Edward was made prince of Wales by his father. After this it gradually became the fashion to create the king's eldest son prince of Wales. That custom has lasted down to our own day.

7. Though Edward was an able soldier, his greatest strength was as a lawgiver and administrator. Intent as he was on his conquest of the Principality, he was even more busily engaged, during the first half of his reign, in drawing up a remarkable series of new laws and in striving with all his might to see them carried out in practice. With all their importance Edward's laws do not contain very much that is novel or original. They owe their fame to the care with which he discerned the practical needs of his people and the skill with which he engrafted into our permanent constitution the best results of the age of unrest and revolution in which he had grown up. His reign has been called a *period of definition*, by which it is meant that he made clear points that were formerly doubtful, and selected from the rich store of precedents, furnished by the age of the Barons' War, the institutions which his keen eye saw were of most value to himself and his subjects, and the most likely to bring about the permanent welfare of England. Between 1275 and 1290 a series of great laws passed in review every branch of both the local and central administration, and made their permanent mark in English history. In the later years of his reign we shall see the same statesmanlike policy of definition applied to the constitution, which under his guidance took the form which it has retained ever since.

8. On reaching England Edward made Robert Burnell his

chancellor, and retained him in that office until his death in 1292. The credit for the legislation of the period is to be divided between the chancellor and Edward, who rewarded Burnell with the bishopric of Bath and Wells. In 1275 the Statute of Westminster the First, one of the great laws of the reign, was passed in Westminster I., the *statute of Westminster the First*. It was mainly aimed at strengthening the king's government and ensuring peace; but it re-enacted many of the best provisions of the Great Charter and provided for the freedom of elections to parliament. Part of the statute included a permanent grant to Edward and his successors of a duty on every sack of wool and every bundle of sheepskins and leather sent out of the country. This was called the *Old and Great Custom*. It was henceforth an important source of revenue, and it was a proof of the growing wealth and prosperity of the country that the kings were able in the future to derive a large portion of their income from a tax on trade.

The Great Custom.

9. In 1278 Edward passed the *statute of Gloucester*, which ordered an inquiry into all law courts and jurisdictions held by the feudal barons, and sought to limit their number. The Statute of Gloucester, 1278. Commissioners went through the country to every franchise, and demanded by what warranty the holder of it exercised his right. For this reason the letters issued by Edward's commission were called writs of *quo warranto*. Edward's object was to break down the power of the nobles, and make every court depend on the crown. But his barons bitterly resented his action as an attack upon their privileges. It was said that when the commissioners asked Earl Warenne by what right he held his courts, the earl bared his sword and haughtily declared that this weapon was his authority. "My ancestors came over with the Conqueror," said Warenne, "and won their lands with their sword, and with the same sword will I defend them against all who wish to take them from me." These fierce words voiced the opinion of the barons, and Edward was wise enough not to force them to extremities. He suffered many franchises to remain that he would gladly have abolished; but he took care to create no fresh ones, and saw that all the lords were thoroughly obedient to him.

10. In 1279 Edward passed the *statute of Mortmain*. Lands which went to the Church were said to have fallen into the dead hand, or in Latin, *in mortua manu*. The Statute of Mortmain, 1279. and the statute forbade any further grants of lands to the Church without the king's leave. Edward's motive

was partly to prevent an increase of the wealth and power of the Church, and partly to prevent more lands falling to clerical owners, who were not so well able to fight his battles as the lay barons. His action was resented by the stricter churchmen, and in particular by the archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop at the time was John Peckham, a Franciscan friar, and a very busy, well-meaning, and active man, who was so eager for the rights of the Church that he was constantly causing great irritation to Edward by his claims. More than once there seemed to be a good chance of a conflict between Edward and Peckham breaking out, such as had raged between Henry II. and Archbishop Thomas. But Edward's prudence and Peckham's fear of his sovereign continued to keep matters at peace. On the whole, how-

Circum-
specte
Agatis,
1285.

ever, the advantage was with the king, who would not give up the statute of Mortmain, and who in 1285 passed a law called *Circumspecte Agatis* (act cautiously), by which he forced the Church courts to confine themselves to business that was strictly ecclesiastical, and not to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the law courts of the crown. Yet, powerful as he was, Edward could not prevent the popes nominating whom they would to great places in the English Church. Peckham himself had been appointed by papal provision, and Edward could never persuade the pope to allow the Chancellor Burnell a richer bishopric than his see of Bath and Wells. Edward was, however, strong enough to put a practical end to the pope's exercising any rights as overlord of England by virtue of King John's submission in 1213. He refused to pay the tribute John had promised, and the popes were wise enough not to press for it.

11. In 1285 Edward passed two famous laws, called the *statute of Westminster the Second* and the *statute of Winchester*. The

Statutes of
West-
minster II.
and
Winchester,
1285.

former made important changes in the land laws. One of its clauses was called *De Donis Conditionalibus*—that is, "concerning gifts on condition." Its effect was to make it easier for a landholder to *entail*, or settle, his land upon a particular line of his descendants for ever.

In practice, however, this custom of tying up lands from generation to generation was found to work badly, and the judges interpreted Edward's law in such a fashion that it lost its worst sting. It had, however, some effect towards creating the English custom of settling lands strictly on the eldest son, which has proved more profitable to a few great houses than to the king or country. The statute of Winchester aimed at putting down riots

and violence by making each Hundred responsible for all breaches of the peace within its limits, and by providing for the proper arming and calling out of the fyrd, or, as it soon became called, the militia. It was in a sense a new version of Henry II.'s Assize of Arms brought up to date.

12. The last great law of the reign was the *statute of Westminster the Third*, passed in 1290, and often called from its opening words, *Quia Emptores*. It allowed any landholder to sell his land if he wished it, but enacted that the buyer should not be the vassal of the man of whom he had acquired the land, but stand in the same relation to the lord of the seller as the seller had stood himself. The effect of this was, in the long run, to bring most landholders under the direct lordship of the crown, and so still further to weaken the position of the barons.

Statute of
West-
minster III,
1290.

13. Despite Edward's new laws, the government was only properly carried on when the king was himself in England. Between 1286 and 1289 foreign troubles carried both Edward and Burnell to Gascony. During their absence the judges sold verdicts for money, and the ministers were so corrupt and oppressive that Edward, on his return, appointed a special commission to hear the numerous complaints brought against them by his subjects. All the judges but four were heavily fined and dismissed from office. Soon after this stern act, Edward issued orders that all Jews should be expelled from England. The Jews had come to England about the time of the Norman conquest, and had shown such skill in business as to make much money for themselves. They were unpopular as foreigners and as unbelievers, and also because they were in the habit of lending money at high rates of interest. They were, however, favoured by the kings, and were glad to pay highly for the royal protection. Gradually, however, the feeling against them became very bitter. Edward was brought over by it to withdraw his support from them. In 1290 he drove them from the land altogether.

Trials of
the judges,
1289, and
expulsion of
the Jews,
1290.

14. In 1286 Alexander III. king of Scots died, the last male representative of the old line of Scottish monarchs. With him ended a long and prosperous period for Scotland, during which the various nations which were ruled by the Scots king were gradually becoming blended together into a single people. The elements which made up the Scottish kingdom were even more various than those

Scotland
under
Alexander
III.

which were brought together in Edward's realm. The original Scots were the Celtic-speaking Highlanders, who dwelt amongst the mountains of the north and west. Their territory did not, however, extend further south than the Clyde and the Forth, which were the original southern limits of the Scottish kingdom. But we have seen how by the conquest of Strathclyde, or Cumbria, a Welsh population in the south-west of the modern realm was brought under the rule of the Scottish king, so that his rule extended over the Clyde to the Solway and the Esk. We have also seen how from the cession of the English district of Lothian, originally the northern part of Northumbria, the dominions of the Scottish king had been extended towards the south-east from the Forth to the Tweed. To these new districts and new peoples brought under his sway must be added the Danes and Norsemen, who had largely displaced the Celtic inhabitants in the western and northern islands and in the extreme north, and the Norman nobles who had become the chief landed proprietors since the twelfth century. By this time the Welsh, the Normans, the English, and the Danes were sufficiently united with the Celts for all to call themselves Scots. The most important and populous part of the country was in the south or Lowlands, which spoke a form of the old speech of Northumbria, which was soon to be called the Scots tongue. The original Scots were henceforth called Highlanders, and their language more often called Gaelic than Scots. The Highlanders were very like their near kinsmen the Irish, and were still for many centuries to be governed after the old Celtic fashion, by which each tribe was practically ruled by its clan chieftain. On the other hand, English and Norman influence had made most of the Lowlanders almost Englishmen. The Welsh of the south-west were rapidly losing their old nationality and becoming English in speech and institutions. The Danes of the north, cut off from their kinsfolk in Scandinavia, since the Norse invasions had come to an end, were also becoming Anglicized. Up the east coast English influence gradually penetrated over the Forth and Tay, or to the low and fertile region between the mountains and the sea, far beyond Aberdeen, and almost up to Inverness. The result was that English-speaking Scotland was become very extensive. But all the various races dwelling in Scotland were ruled by one king, and were becoming equally proud of the name of Scot. For a century their rulers had lived on good terms with the English monarchs, but this happy period now ended.

GENEALOGY OF THE EARLY SCOTTISH KINGS, SHOWING THE
CHIEF CLAIMANTS IN 1290

MALCOLM CANMORE.
d. 1093, m. St. Margaret, sister to Edgar Ætheling.

DAVID I.,
1124-1153.

Matilda,
m. Henry I.

Henry,
earl of Huntingdon.

WILLIAM THE LION,
1165-1214.

David,
earl of Huntingdon.

ALEXANDER II.,
1214-1249.

Margaret,
m. Alan of Galloway.

Isabella,
m. Robert Bruce.

ALEXANDER III.,
1249-1286.

Devorgilla,
m. John Balliol.

Robert Bruce
the claimant.

Margaret,
m. Eric of Norway.

JOHN BALLIOL,
king of Scots,
1292-1296.

Robert Bruce,
earl of Carrick.

MARGARET,
the Maid of Norway,
d. 1290.

EDWARD BALLIOL,
nominal king of
Scots, 1332-1338.

ROBERT I. BRUCE,
king of Scots,
1306-1329.

DAVID II. BRUCE,
1329-1371.

Margaret,
m. Walter Stewart
of Scotland, from
whom the Stewarts
are descended.

(Scottish kings in small capitals ; names in italics not mentioned in text.)

15. Alexander III.'s nearest heir was Margaret, his daughter's daughter, a young girl, called the *Maid of Norway*, because her father was Eric, king of that country. Proclaimed queen of Scots on Alexander's death, she remained in Norway under her father's care, while her realm was ruled by a regency, which found it hard to keep the country in good order. Edward, who watched Scottish affairs carefully, saw in a female reign the best prospects of extending his power over the north. He proposed that his eldest surviving son, Edward of Carnarvon, should marry the little queen, and thus bring about the union of the two lands. On his pledging himself

that the two kingdoms should each retain their own laws and customs even if the marriage resulted in their being joined under a common sovereign, the Scots cheerfully accepted his plan. In 1290 the *treaty of Brigham* was signed embodying these conditions. It was the wisest scheme that could be devised for bringing about the peaceful unity of Britain. Unluckily, the Maid of Norway died in the course of the same year on her journey from Norway to Scotland.

16. A swarm of claimants now arose to the Scottish throne. As none had a clear title, and several had eager supporters, it looked as if the sword alone would settle the question of the succession. The Scots were alarmed at the prospect of a long and bloody civil war, and resolved to get out of the difficulty by calling on Edward to decide which of the candidates had the best right. Edward willingly agreed to undertake this course. He required, however, that all the Scottish barons and all the claimants should take an oath of fealty to him as overlord of Scotland before he began to examine the question. He gladly welcomed so good an opportunity of settling the relations of the two kingdoms which had remained somewhat doubtful since Richard I. remitted to William the Lion the hard conditions of the treaty of Falaise. Though every subsequent Scottish king had done homage to the English king, yet each of them possessed large estates in England, and it was not always clear whether their submission was for their English estates or for the Scottish throne. As Scotland grew stronger her kings became more unwilling to acknowledge their subjection to a foreign king, and the good understanding that had prevailed for so long between them and their southern neighbours had made the English kings see no reason in pressing their claim. However, circumstances had now changed. If Edward did not arbitrate, there was the certainty of Scotland falling into terrible confusion. The claimants, in their anxiety to curry favour with Edward, were the first to submit. The chief nobles followed, and Edward thereupon undertook to try the great suit for the succession.

17. The pleas were examined by 104 judges, of whom 24 were chosen by Edward and 40 by each of the two claimants whose rights seemed the nearest. These were John Balliol, lord of Galloway, and Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale. Both of these were descended on the female side from David, earl of Huntingdon, Balliol being the grandson of his eldest daughter, Margaret, and Bruce the son of

The
claimants
to the
Scottish
Succession,
1290-1292.

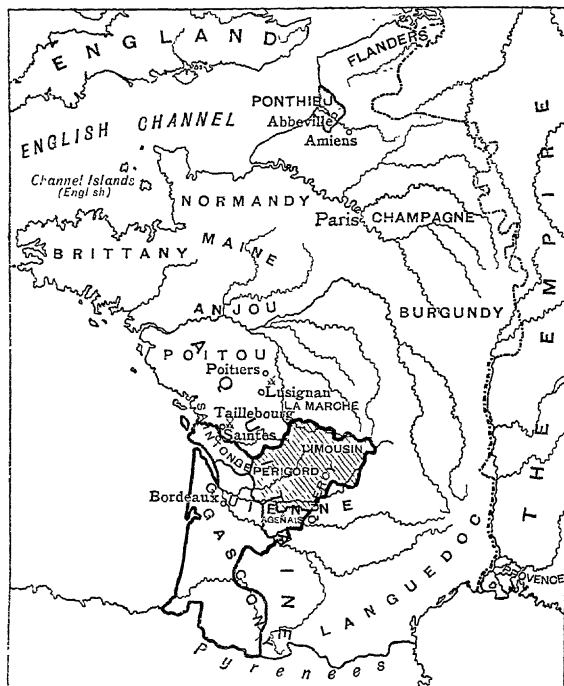
Accession
of John
Balliol,
1292.

his second daughter, Isabella. Balliol's claim was based upon his representing the elder branch, while Bruce's title rested on the fact that he was a generation nearer Earl David. The judges went into the case with great care and impartiality, and finally adjudged the crown to Balliol. The decision was announced on November 30, 1292, at Berwick-on-Tweed, then a Scottish town. Balliol at once did homage to Edward, and was crowned king of Scots. The question seemed peaceably settled, and Edward won great reputation for justice in his conduct of the case.

18. Fresh trouble at once fell upon Edward; this time from France. All through his reign there had been constant bickering between Edward and the French kings. There were England
and France,
1259-1293. great difficulties in carrying out the treaty of 1259, and the irritation caused to the French by Edward's position in Gascony was increased when his queen, Eleanor of Castile, inherited through her mother the county of *Ponthieu* on the lower *Somme*, so that Edward's position in France was thereby strengthened. All through the reign of Philip III., who succeeded his father St. Louis in 1270, the relations of the two countries were strained; but in 1279 both kings agreed to make the *treaty of Amiens*, by which Edward's position in Gascony was improved and his wife put in possession of *Ponthieu*. Philip IV., who became king of France in 1285, was a stronger king than his father, and was eager to undermine Edward's hold over the French fiefs, by pushing his power as suzerain to the uttermost. Matters were made worse by quarrels between English and French seamen, which grew so bitter that the French hanged some English mariners to the yard-arms of their ships, with dogs hung up beside them, "as if they made no difference," said an indignant chronicler, "between a dog and an Englishman." This so enraged the English shipmen that in 1293 they challenged the French to fight a pitched battle, in which the latter were defeated with great slaughter. The beaten sailors besieged Philip IV. with their complaints, and Philip summoned Edward to his court at Paris to answer for the behaviour of his subjects. Edward sent his brother Edmund, earl of Lancaster, as his agent, but Edmund was too simple to be a good negotiator. Philip persuaded him to give up Gascony to him just as a form, and on condition of its being soon restored. But when the time of restitution came, Philip's agents kept a tight hold over the whole of the duchy. Edward, seeing that his brother had been tricked, angrily broke off negotiations, and went to war with the French.

19. Philip IV. prepared to invade England, and sought to stir

up Edward's enemies to make common cause against him. At French instigation the Welsh rose in revolt, and forced Edward to divert to their subjection an army collected to recover Gascony. It



Emory Walker sc.

Boundary of Lands nominally allowed to Henry III. in 1259...

Lands secured by Edward I. in 1279.....

Lands surrendered by Edward I. in 1279.....

ENGLISH KING'S DOMINIONS IN FRANCE IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

was only after hard fighting, in the course of which Edward himself ran great personal risk, that the Welsh rebellion was put down. Then Philip stirred up an even more effective enemy to

Edward in Scotland, where things had been going badly since John Balliol's succession. Now that Edward's authority over Scotland had been recognized, Scotsmen, beaten in the local law courts, appealed to Edward's courts and asked him to do them justice. It was a regular thing for a suzerain to receive appeals from his vassal's courts, and Edward had suffered much from the way in which Philip IV. of France had encouraged his vassals in Gascony to take their appeals to Paris. He saw no harm, therefore, in allowing the Scots to come to his court, and was probably surprised when the Scots nobles grew indignant at the practice. But there had been no precedents for such appeals from Scotland to England in the past, and the Scots declared that they would allow Edward no such power. As John Balliol seemed weak and hesitating, the nobles deprived him of nearly all his authority, and entrusted it to a committee of twelve, like the council of fifteen of the Provisions of Oxford. The new government broke off all relations with Edward, and concluded a close alliance with the French.

The French and Scottish wars, 1293-1295.

20. Edward met this combination of enemies by forming an alliance with the emperor, the count of Flanders, and other friends of England abroad. But he chiefly relied upon the good will of his own subjects, and the step he now took to win his people to his side was ever memorable in the history of the growth of our constitution. Already on many occasions he had summoned representative parliaments like Montfort's famous assembly of 1265. Thus in 1275 a parliament met which formed an almost exact precedent for the full parliament which Edward gathered together in 1295. To this he did not merely convoke the earls and barons, the bishops and abbots. Beside them came two knights from every shire, and two citizens and burgesses from every city and borough. A new element was also introduced in the appearance of representatives of the lower clergy, in the persons of deans and archdeacons, one proctor, or representative, of every cathedral chapter, and two proctors for the parish clergy of every bishopric. Thus each of the three *estates*, or class divisions, into which society was then divided—the barons, the clergy, and the commons—had every chance of making their wishes felt. Later times have called the 1295 parliament the *Model Parliament*, because it, even more than those of 1265 and 1275, became the type upon which all later parliaments were based. Its assembly is the more important since Edward deliberately called it as a means of taking his people into partnership in a great crisis.

The Model Parliament of 1295.

"What touches all," said he, in his letters, or writs, of summons. "should be approved of all. It is also very clear that common dangers should be met by measures agreed upon in common." It is from this moment that the parliamentary constitution of England was completed. What with Simon of Montfort was the expedient of a moment, became henceforth with Edward I. a permanent principle of policy.

21. Edward's parliament voted large sums of money which enabled him to crush the Welsh revolt, ward off any prospect of invasion, and send an army to win back Gascony. But it was evident that Philip would not be beaten until the Scots had been taught to respect the power of Edward. Accordingly, in 1296 Edward led an army into Scotland, and resolved to punish John Balliol as he had formerly punished Llewelyn of Wales. Balliol made a poor resistance, and after a very little fighting, surrendered his crown to Edward. The subjection of Scotland was thus apparently effected with infinitely greater ease than the conquest of the Principality. Edward treated Scotland as he had treated Wales. He declared Scotland annexed directly to his crown, and appointed English nobles to rule the realm in his name. He wandered through the land and received the homage of thousands of Scottish landholders. He transferred the sacred stone, seated on which the Scottish kings had been wont to be crowned at Scone, to Westminster Abbey, where it ultimately became the base of the coronation chair of the English kings. After this easy conquest of a kingdom he hoped to devote all his resources to the recovery of Gascony.

22. New troubles arose in his own realm, which once more forced Edward to postpone his purpose. This time his own clergy and barons played the game of the enemy. The trouble with the clergy began when Robert Winchelsea, who had succeeded Peckham as archbishop of Canterbury, refused to allow Edward to raise any more taxes from ecclesiastics, on the ground that the pope, Boniface VIII., had issued a bull, called *Clericis laicos*, which forbade the clergy to pay any taxes to secular princes. In great disgust Edward declared that, if the clergy would not help to support the state, the state should not protect them. He declared all the clergy outlaws, and announced that he would punish no man who did injury to a priest.

23. It was now the turn of the barons to resist. Edward wished to send many of his chief lords to Gascony, while he himself went

to fight against Philip iv., in Flanders, whose count was his ally. Headed by Humphrey Bohun, earl of Hereford, constable of England, and Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, marshal of England, a large section of the barons declined to go to Gascony unless the king accompanied them. In 1297 there was a hot dispute between Edward and the earls at the parliament at Salisbury. "You shall go to Gascony," said Edward to Norfolk, the marshal, "whether I go or not." On the marshal persisting in his refusal, the king burst into a passion. "By God, Sir Earl," he cried, "you shall either go or hang." "By the same oath," answered Norfolk, "I will neither go nor hang." The two earls gathered an army round them, and made common cause with Winchelsea. In great disgust Edward went to Flanders to fight against Philip, leaving his chief nobles behind him. He could send no real help to Gascony. He only raised money to pay his troops by imposing taxes of his own arbitrary will. He seized all the merchants' wool and forced them to pay a heavy duty, called the *Maletote*, or evil toll, before he would surrender it. As soon as he was beyond sea, the two earls marched to London and easily forced the weak regency, of which the boy, Edward of Carnarvon, was the nominal head, to submit to their will. It was now agreed that a fresh confirmation of Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest should be issued in Edward's name, to which new articles were to be appended by which the king promised to renounce the *Maletote*, and never in the future to raise similar aids or taxes save with the consent of parliament. This *Confirmatio Cartarum* was sent over to Edward in Flanders, and very unwillingly he gave his consent to it. It was an important epoch in the growth of our constitution. Though the earls were greedy and pedantic, and Winchelsea thought more of the privileges of the Church than the liberties of the realm, Edward in his need had acted as a mere tyrant, and it was necessary that his power should be checked.

24. Terrible news from Scotland showed that the king had yielded none too soon. With all his ambition and violence, Edward still wished to rule Scotland well, but many of those who governed that kingdom in his name were cruel and greedy men, and the Scots hated English domination even when it was fair and just. Their subjection had been due to the folly of their king and the half-heartedness of the chief Scottish nobles, most of whom submitted

The baronial opposition under Norfolk and Hereford, 1297.

Confirmatio Cartarum, 1297.

The Scottish rising under Wallace, 1297.

because they possessed estates in England which they did not wish to lose by offending Edward. It was otherwise with the mass of the Scots people, who were indignant because their national independence was destroyed and their country trampled upon by the foreigner. Within a few months there were popular risings all over the country, and soon an able leader to the insurgents was found in Sir William Wallace of Elderslie, not far from Glasgow. In 1297 Wallace gathered a gallant army round him, and offered battle to Earl Warenne, Edward's aged and easy-going governor of Scotland. At *Stirling Bridge*, near the abbey of Cambuskenneth, Warenne was out-generalled by Wallace and utterly defeated. Before the end of the year all Scotland threw off the English yoke, and Wallace spread desolation over the English border.

25. Edward hurried back from Flanders, where he had done very little against Philip. In 1298 he once more led an army into Scotland, and engaged Wallace in battle at *Falkirk* on July 22. The English army fought on horseback, after the fashion that had prevailed ever since the battle of *Hastings*, though Edward had learnt from his Welsh war the wisdom of combining archers with the cavalry, so as to wear down the foe from a distance. Most of the barons and knights of Scotland were holding aloof from Wallace, or were actually on Edward's side, so that the Scottish hero had to trust to those Scots who were not rich enough to fight on horseback. But Wallace had the eye of a good general, and saw that his only chance of victory was to keep his troops closely together. He planted his infantry, whose chief arm was the pike, in dense squares or circles. For a long time the stubborn pikemen resisted the repeated rushes of Edward's knights, but the king cleverly broke through their ranks by constant flights of arrows; and then the cavalry rode through the gaps and dispersed the Scottish squares with great slaughter. Wallace fled to France, and once more it seemed as if Scotland were at Edward's feet.

26. A renewal of Edward's domestic troubles, and the continued struggle with Philip IV., destroyed the king's hopes of completing the conquest of the north. He soon saw that he could not fight both France and Scotland at the same time, and in 1299 made peace with Philip, and, being now a widower, married the French king's sister Margaret as a pledge of better relations for the future. Even then Philip retained for several years the greater part of Gascony, but luckily for Edward, the French king quarrelled with the

Edward's
reconcilia-
tion with
France and
the Church.

imperious Pope Boniface VIII., and soon found it necessary to buy Edward's friendship by surrendering him Gascony. By 1303 Philip had ruined Boniface and broken down the overwhelming power of the papacy. In 1305 a Gascon subject of Edward's was chosen pope by Philip IV.'s good will, and took the name of Clement V. This unworthy pontiff deserted Italy and tarried in France, finally taking up his abode at Avignon, on the Rhone, and doing complacently the will of the mighty French king. He was only less subservient to Edward, and abandoned Archbishop Winchelsea to the king's anger. Winchelsea was driven into exile, and with his fall Edward became once more master over the English Church. Long before that the bull *Clericis laicos* had been given up, and Edward's persecution of Winchelsea had a sinister appearance of mere revenge.

27. France was thus conciliated and the clerical opposition crushed. While these processes were going on, Edward was also breaking down the baronial opposition which had triumphed over him in 1297. Despite his agreement to confirm the charters, his troubles with the barons went on for several years, and effectively prevented the united effort of all England, which alone could complete the work began at Falkirk. Edward was very sore at being forced to give up so much power, and behaved almost as badly as his father had done in regarding the letter rather than the spirit of his concessions. Disgusted at his narrow spirit, the barons refused to follow him to Scotland until he had really carried out his promises. In 1300 he was forced to accept another series of additions to the charters, contained in a document called *Articuli super Cartas*, which ordered a survey of the forests to be made, in order to check the king's encroachments on freemen's rights by extending the boundaries of the forests, within which he had more power than over the rest of his realm. Edward resented the attempt to limit his authority over the forests with extreme bitterness, and struggled as long as he could. In 1301 he made a further submission, but even after that he induced Clement V. to free him from his oath, though, to his credit be it said, he made no use of the papal dispensation. The long struggle taught him that it was only by yielding to his barons that he could subdue Scotland.

28. It was not until 1303 that Edward was able to throw all his efforts into conquering Scotland. In 1304 he captured Stirling, and at last saw Scotland at his feet. Wallace now came back to the scene of his former triumphs, but was not able to effect much against

Edward. He was taken prisoner, and in 1305 beheaded as a traitor at London. Fierce and cruel though he had been, his courage and daring had made him the idol of his countrymen. When the nobles despaired of freedom, Wallace organized revolt and kept alive the spirit of liberty. The work that he did survived his apparent failure.

29. Edward had drawn up a plan for the government of Scotland, under which the land was to be divided into four parts, each of which was to be under two justices, one a Scot and the other an Englishman; while the king's nephew, John of Brittany, was to be warden of all Scotland. But the new system had hardly begun when a fresh revolt compelled Edward to begin the work of conquest all over again. Robert Bruce, earl of Carrick, grandson of the unsuccessful claimant, had generally been a supporter of Edward, and had taken a prominent part in establishing the new constitution. He had a great foe in John Comyn of Badenoch, the hereditary rival of his house. In 1306 the two enemies agreed to make peace and meet at Dumfries to discuss their future action. There Bruce suddenly fell upon Comyn and treacherously murdered him. Despairing of Edward's pardon, he fled to the hills, and finding the people rallying round him, he dexterously posed as the champion of Scottish independence, and renewed his house's claim to the throne. The Scots were glad to follow any leader against the hated English, and Bruce, though treacherous and self-seeking, soon showed that he had the ability and courage necessary to rule a people struggling for freedom. In a few months he was crowned king at Scone, and for the third time Edward had to face the prospect of conquering afresh the stubborn nation that had so long defied his efforts.

30. Edward was now nearly seventy years of age, and his health had latterly been broken; but his courage was as high as ever, and he resolved to conquer Scotland for the third time. In 1307 the old king was once more on the border, but his infirmities made it impossible for him to move quickly. The effort proved too much for his declining strength, and on July 7 he died at Burgh-on-Sands, almost the last village on the English border. With him perished the last hope of conquering Scotland, but though the chief ambition of his life was thus a failure, he had done a great work for England. The conqueror of Wales, the framer of a whole series of great laws, the maker of our mediæval constitution, he had turned the French

king from his dearest purpose, curbed the fierce baronage, and even set some limits to the claims of the Church. He was the first real Englishman to reign after the Norman conquest, and the creator of the modern English nation as well as of the modern English state, though he could not effect his purpose of bringing all our island under his own domination. That his own realm should henceforth be ruled after a constitutional fashion, and not by despotic caprice, seemed assured when even the stubborn will of Edward was forced to give way to his subjects. The best guarantee for the permanence of the charters and of the popular parliament lay in the fact that they were wrested not only from a capricious despot like John, or a weakling like Henry III., but also from a strong and powerful king like Edward I.

CHAPTER III

EDWARD II. OF CARNARVON (1307-1327)

Chief Dates:

- 1307. Accession of Edward II.
- 1311. The Ordinances drawn up.
- 1312. Death of Gaveston.
- 1314. Battle of Bannockburn.
- 1322. Battle of Boroughbridge.
- 1326. Landing of Isabella.
- 1327. Deposition of Edward II.

1. EDWARD OF CARNARVON was twenty-three years old when he became king. Tall, graceful, and handsome, he looked almost as fine a man as his father, but an utter lack of serious purpose blasted his whole career. It was to no purpose that Edward I. had carefully trained his son both in military science and in business; the youth showed no taste for anything but his own amusements. The old king was bitterly disgusted, and attributing his son's levity to the influence of a Gascon knight, Peter of Gaveston, with whom he had been educated, he banished the foreign favourite early in 1307. But as soon as his father was dead, Edward recalled Gaveston, and, despite his having solemnly promised his dying father to persevere in it, abandoned the campaign against the Scots. In every way he reversed the policy of Edward I., and at once embarked upon a course of action that ultimately involved himself in ruin and wrought terrible havoc to his kingdom. Though there have been worse kings than Edward II., there have been none so negligent and light-minded.

2. Under Edward I. the barons had been discontented with the growing power of the crown, but had been restrained in their opposition by the strong will and wise policy of the king. With the accession of Edward II. the baronial opposition at once revived, and soon proved as formidable to the monarchy as in the days of Henry III. The barons' disgust of Edward's affection for Gaveston gave them

their first pretext for revolt, and they had the people with them in their aversion to the favourite. Gaveston was quick-witted and a good soldier, but his head was turned by his sudden elevation, and he had an unhappy knack of sharp and bitter speech that mortally offended the barons. Before long Edward made him earl of Cornwall and married him to his niece, the sister of the young Earl Gilbert of Gloucester. In 1308 a parliament of barons met and forced the king to drive him into exile. Edward strove to lighten his misfortunes by appointing him governor of Ireland, and set to work at once to intrigue for his return. In 1309 the king shrewdly adopted a long series of reforms, which a parliament of the three states urged upon him. In return for these concessions, the parliament allowed Edward to bring his friend back to England. But the leading barons refused to be bound by the acts of this parliament.

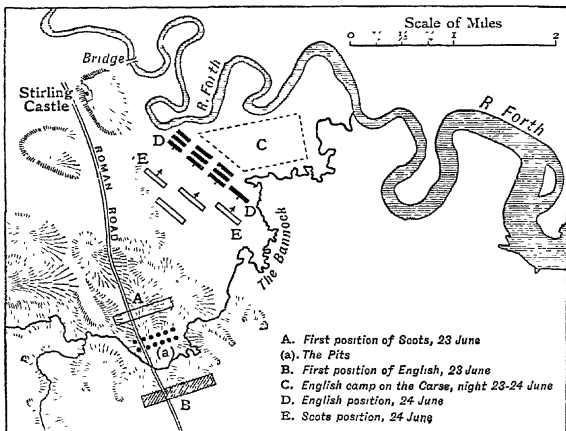
3. In 1310 another baronial assembly resolved to punish the king for restoring his favourite by compelling him to appoint a committee of barons to draft ordinances for the future government of his realm. In a vain hope of saving Gaveston, Edward agreed to this proposal. Accordingly, a body of twenty-one *Lords Ordainers* was appointed from the earls, barons, and bishops. The Ordinances and the Lords Ordainers, 1310-1311. In 1311 they drew up the *Ordinances*. By them Gaveston was to be banished for life, the great offices of state were to be filled up with the advice of the barons, and the king was not to go to war, raise an army, or leave the kingdom without their permission. It was a complete programme of limited monarchy, but no word was said as to the commons and clergy. To the ordainers parliament still meant a parliament of barons.

4. Gaveston went into exile for the second time, but early in 1312 Edward recalled him. Thereupon the ordainers raised an army and besieged Gaveston in Scarborough Castle. After a short siege Gaveston surrendered, and the barons agreed to spare his life. The murder of Gaveston, 1312. Not long after he was brutally put to death by the earl of Warwick, the most rancorous of his enemies, who thought himself free to slay the favourite because he had not been a party to the promise to spare his life. The king was bitterly incensed at the treachery which had lured his favourite to death, and feebly strove to revenge him. Ultimately he was forced to give way, and leave power in the hands of the ordainers.

5. It was high time that the king and barons made peace, for

during their dissensions Robert Bruce had been establishing his power over the whole of Scotland. When Edward I. died, Bruce's position was still doubtful; but when the new king gave up fighting the war in person the chances of the Scots grew brighter. Between 1307 and 1314, Bruce conquered nearly all Scotland. He won over most of the Scottish barons to his side, and gradually captured the strong castles which Edward I. had established to keep the Scots in subjection. The chief of the few castles

Robert
Bruce
becomes
master of
Scotland,
1307-1314.



BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN.

that still remained in English hands was Stirling, a place of great military importance, because it commanded the lowest bridge over the Forth, by which the easiest road between the Lowlands and the Highlands passed. At last Bruce besieged Stirling, and pressed the garrison so hard that they agreed to surrender if they were not relieved by St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24, 1314.

6. If Stirling fell, the last vestige of English rule in Scotland was destroyed, and even Edward felt that he must make an effort to avoid such a calamity. King and barons accordingly joined to raise a great army, and set off to relieve Stirling before the appointed day. The mighty host

Battle of
Bannock-
burn, 1314.

was more formidable in appearance than in reality. The presence of the king prevented any real general from being appointed, and the barons, still sulky and discontented, fought with undisguised reluctance. The English army moved so slowly that it only reached the neighbourhood of Stirling on June 23. Bruce resolved to fight a battle to prevent the raising of the siege, and took up a strong defensive position on the north bank of the Bannockburn, a few miles to the south of Stirling. The English avoided his formidable lines and crossed the Bannock lower down. But sections of their army were badly beaten in two preliminary skirmishes, and the main body, though getting into communication with the garrison of Stirling, was forced to pass the night in great dread of attack in the swampy plain of the carse, whence the Forth and Bannock prevented an easy retreat. Next day, June 24, Bruce saw that the enemy had delivered himself into his hands. Though his trust was in infantry, armed with spears and marshalled in dense squadrons, he did not hesitate to leave his position on the hills and march down over against the English camp, as if challenging an attack. Against the best advice Edward accepted battle, but he neglected all the precautions by which his father had won his victories. No effort was made to combine the archers with the men-at-arms, and the English relied entirely on the shock of a cavalry charge. But the English horsemen failed to penetrate the Scottish squares. Soon the whole English army was in a state of wild confusion. The few who fought bravely, conspicuous among whom was the young earl of Gloucester, perished on the field. The majority fled disgracefully, and Edward II. set the example of cowardice to his army. Bruce won a complete victory. Stirling Castle opened its gates to him, and Scottish independence was fully vindicated.

7. The disaster of Bannockburn made Edward more dependent upon his barons than ever. For the next few years power remained with the ordainers, but the ordainers proved as incompetent as Edward to govern England. Their wisest councillor, Archbishop Winchelsea, was now dead, and their leader was Edward's cousin, Thomas, earl of Lancaster, the son of Earl Edmund, brother of Edward I. Earl Thomas was by far the most powerful and wealthy of the English earls. By inheritance and marriage he united under his control the resources of five earldoms. He had been a capable leader of opposition, but his ability was small; he was greedy, selfish, and domineering, and knew better how to humiliate the king than to

rule the country. He made few attempts to save the northern counties from the frequent forays with which the Scots now insulted the weakness of England. The country was full of tumult and private war, and as Lancaster's weakness became known, even Edward plucked up courage to assert himself. It looked as if England was threatened with a new war between the king and his cousin.

8. The wiser barons now took matters into their own hands. Headed by Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, they made terms with the better men of the court. The coalition thus formed sought to impose terms on both Edward and Thomas. In 1318 this *middle party* got power into its own hands by the *Treaty of Leake*, which was confirmed in the parliament of York. By it a standing council, like the Fifteen of 1258, was appointed to act in the king's name. Edward was allowed little power, but was treated respectfully, while Lancaster was muzzled and held aloof in sulky isolation. From 1318 to 1321 things went much better, but the quarrels of the barons at last broke down the unity of the coalition. Edward, eager to win back authority, now made a close friendship with the two Hugh Despensers, father and son, who had hitherto worked with Pembroke, but were soon denounced as favourites. They were at least English noblemen, and not foreign upstarts like Gaveston; but the barons soon showed that they could hate a renegade as

The fall of
Lancaster, 1322. bitterly as they had ever hated an alien adventurer. They strongly resented the titles, estates, and favours

which Edward conferred on his new friends. In particular they took alarm when the younger Despenser, who, like Gaveston, had married a sister of the earl of Gloucester slain at Bannockburn, strove to obtain for himself the position of earl of Gloucester, vacant since his brother-in-law's death without male heirs. By 1321 the Despensers were strong enough to make the barons very anxious to mete out to them the fate of Gaveston. Headed by Lancaster, parliament sentenced them to banishment. The loss of his favourites inspired Edward with an energy rarely to be found in him. In 1322 he took up arms on their behalf, and recalled them from beyond the sea. The barons made a poor fight, and before long Lancaster was defeated and taken prisoner at the *battle of Boroughbridge*, in Yorkshire, a fight memorable by the adoption by the royalist army of the new fashion of fighting on foot, which had won Bannockburn for the Scots. A few days later Thomas was tried and executed at his own castle of Pontefract.

9. From the fall of Lancaster to 1326 the Despensers ruled

England. They were shrewd enough to profit by the errors of the ordainers: they sought to improve the government by great schemes of administrative reform, and professed to be the friends of the Commons. Immediately after ^{The Parli-} Lancaster's death a parliament was held at York, ^{ment of} York, 1322, which revoked the ordinances as infringing the rights of the crown, and because they were drawn up by a council of barons only. This parliament laid down the important principle, that matters which are to be established for the estate of our lord the king and for the estate of the realm, shall be treated in parliament by a council of the prelates, earls, and barons, and the commonalty of the realm. This is the most important constitutional advance made under Edward II. Henceforth no law could be regarded as valid unless it had received the consent of the Commons.

10. Despite this wise beginning, the rule of the Despensers broke down as signally as that of Lancaster. They were utterly unable to guard the north of England from the devastating inroads of Robert Bruce, and in 1322 made ^{The rule of the} a truce with him which practically recognized him ^{Despensers,} as king of Scots. The favourites thought more of ^{1322-1326.} winning territory and wealth for themselves than of the good government of the kingdom. The elder Hugh became earl of Winchester, and his son acquired the power and many of the estates, though not the title, of the earl of Gloucester. Their covetousness and pride made them generally hated, and their folly prevented them from taking proper measures to protect themselves. They soon excited the enmity of all classes against them.

11. Among the many persons whom the Despensers offended was the queen, Isabella of France, a daughter of Philip the Fair. Seeing that she was not strong enough to induce her husband to dismiss his favourites, she cleverly dis- ^{Isabella and} sembled her wrath, and, in 1325, persuaded her husband ^{Mortimer.} to allow her to visit France, then ruled by her brother, King Charles IV. With her went her eldest son, Edward of Windsor, who was appointed by his father duke of Aquitaine, and commissioned to do homage for that duchy on behalf of the king of England. At Paris Isabella made friends with some of the exiled members of Lancaster's party at whose head was Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, the most powerful of the barons from the March of Wales, who was eager to be avenged on the Despensers and obtain restoration to his estates. At Mortimer's advice, Isabella refused to return to England as long as the Despensers remained in power.

Soon the scandal caused by the queen's open affection for Mortimer induced King Charles to send her out of France. Therefore she went to Hainault, where she betrothed her son to Philippa, daughter of the count of Hainault, and obtained from him enough soldiers and money to make it possible for her to invade England and drive her husband from the throne.

12. In September, 1326, Isabella, Mortimer, and the young Edward landed at Orwell, in Essex, declaring that they had come to avenge the murder of Lancaster and to drive the Despensers from power. England was so tired of Edward II., 1326-1327. The fall of Edward II., 1326-1327. Edward and the Despensers, that men of all ranks flocked eagerly to the camp of the queen. The chief barons, including Henry of Lancaster, the brother and heir of Earl Thomas, declared in her favour. The Londoners murdered Edward's ministers, and opened their gates to his enemies. Against these powerful forces Edward II. could do nothing. He fled to the west, accompanied by the Despensers, and rapidly followed by Isabella and Mortimer. The elder Despenser was taken and slain at Bristol, and his son was hanged at Hereford. The king strove to take refuge in the younger Hugh's Glamorgan-shire estates, but he was soon tracked out and brought prisoner to London. Early in 1327 parliament met at Westminster. It recognized Edward of Aquitaine as Edward III., and forced the old king to resign the crown to his son. Next year the deposed monarch was cruelly murdered at Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire. He was the most worthless of our kings, and richly deserved deposition, yet few beneficial changes have been brought about with more manifest self-seeking than that which hurled him from power. The angry spite of the adulterous queen, the fierce rancour and greediness of Roger Mortimer, and the cowardice of the lesser agents of the revolution can inspire nothing but disgust. Among Edward's foes, Henry of Lancaster alone behaved as an honourable gentleman. But though his wrongs were ostentatiously put forward, he was, like the young duke of Aquitaine, a mere tool in the hands of Isabella and her paramour. Yet the ostentatious care shown to make parliament responsible for the change of ruler showed that even the weak reign of Edward II. had done something to strengthen the fabric of the English constitution.

CHAPTER IV

EDWARD III. (1327-1377)

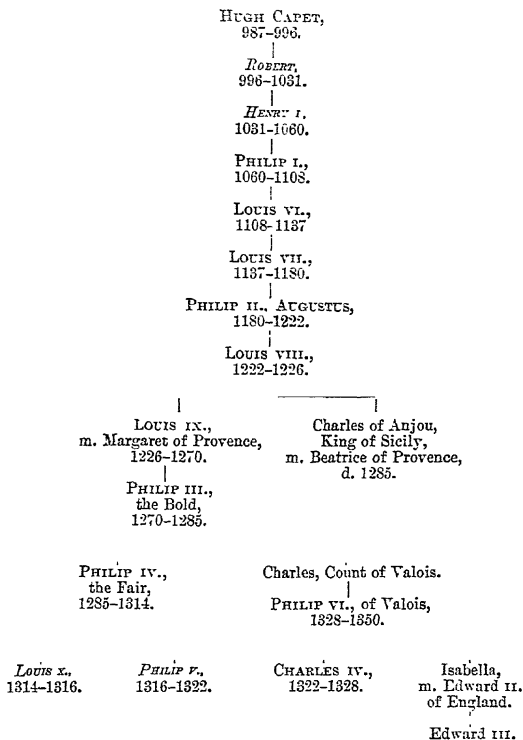
Chief dates:

- 1327. Accession of Edward III.
- 1328. Peace of Northampton.
- 1330. Fall of Mortimer.
- 1333. Battle of Halidon Hill.
- 1337. Beginning of Hundred Years' War.
- 1340. Battle of Sluys.
- 1346. Battles of Crecy and Neville's Cross.
- 1348. Outbreak of the Black Death.
- 1351. Statute of Provisors.
- 1353. Statute of Præmunire.
- 1356. Battle of Poitiers.
- 1360. Treaties of Brétagne and Calais.
- 1367. Battle of Najera.
- 1369. Renewal of the Hundred Years' War.
- 1371. Clerical ministers removed from office.
- 1376. The Good Parliament.
- 1377. Death of Edward III.

1. EDWARD III. was only fourteen years old when he became king, and for three years Isabella and Mortimer ruled in his name. Nominally power went to the council, of which Henry of Lancaster, now restored to his brother's title and estates, was chairman. Troubles at once arose, both with Scotland and France. Robert Bruce's fighting days were over, but he took advantage of the revolution in England to send an army across the border. Though a great force was gathered together to repel the Scots, the English dared not risk a battle, and soon began to negotiate for peace. In 1328 this resulted in the *treaty of Northampton*, by which England withdrew all claim to feudal superiority over Scotland, recognized Robert Bruce as king of Scots, and agreed to the marriage of his son David to Joan, Edward's infant sister. The treaty excited great indignation, and men called it a shameful peace, but it is difficult to see on what other terms an agreement could have been made.

There was not the least chance of driving Robert Bruce from the throne which he had so laboriously won for himself. To continue the war was useless, and its only result would have been to expose the northern counties of England to constant Scottish invasions. Yet the formal surrender of Edward I.'s claims over Scotland cost much to a proud and high-spirited nation. The humiliation was the worse since it was only by concessions almost as hard that Isabella and Mortimer managed to secure peace with France. During the troubles that preceded the fall of Edward of Carnarvon, Charles IV. had taken possession of Gascony, on account of which nominal war had broken out between the two countries. The English were as little able to reconquer Gascony as to win back Scotland, and here again Isabella and Mortimer accepted inevitable facts, though they were more fortunate than in their dealings with the northern kingdom, since they obtained a partial restoration of Gascony before they would agree to conclude peace. This was done by the *treaty of Paris* of 1327. From this time the English duchy of Gascony was cut down to narrow limits, centring round the cities of Bordeaux and Bayonne. Next year, 1328, Charles IV. died, having been the third son of Philip IV. to reign in succession over France and die without male heirs. Immediately the French barons recognized the nearest male heir, Philip, count of Valois, the son of Charles, count of Valois, a brother of Philip IV., as King Philip VI. It had already been laid down in France, when Philip the Fair's eldest son died, leaving a daughter, that women were excluded from the succession. Accordingly the accession of Philip VI. went almost as a matter of course. Isabella, however, who was Charles's sister, protested against the Valois succession. She recognized that France must have a king, and did not claim the throne for herself. However, she maintained that a woman, though incapable of reigning, might form the "bridge and plank" through which her son, Edward III., might succeed. The French barons rightly regarded this as a dangerous claim. Its effect would have been, whenever a king died without a son, to transfer the throne to some foreign prince, whose descent could be traced to a lady of the royal house. The French were not willing to hand over their throne to a foreign sovereign, and Isabella's claim on her son's behalf was quietly pushed aside. She was quite unable to do more than protest, and in 1329 her son virtually recognized the lawfulness of Philip's position by performing homage to him for Aquitaine.

GENEALOGY OF THE FRENCH KINGS OF THE DIRECT CAPETIAN
LINE. SHOWING EDWARD III.'s CLAIMS



French kings mentioned in the text in small capitals; all names not
mentioned in the text in *italics*.

2. The home government of Isabella and Mortimer was as
unsuccessful as their foreign policy. Mortimer thought of nothing
save of acquiring a great position for himself. His ambition was

to unite the whole of the Welsh March under his sway, and he received the title of earl of the March of Wales, or, more shortly, earl of March. For a time he vigorously stamped out all attempts to oppose him. His last triumph was in 1330, when he put to death Edmund, earl of Kent. Edward I.'s son by his second wife, who had convinced himself that his brother, Edward II., was still alive, and strove to bring about his restoration to the throne. Edward III. was now becoming a man, and was keenly alive to the humiliation involved in his dependence on his mother and her paramour. Henry of Lancaster was equally indignant at his exclusion from all real share of power. Accordingly, in 1330, a conspiracy was arranged to drive Mortimer from the position which he had usurped. A band of soldiers was introduced through a secret passage into Nottingham Castle, where Mortimer and the queen were staying. The favourite was arrested and soon afterwards hanged. Isabella was henceforward excluded from any share in public affairs. With their fall the real reign of Edward III. begins.

3. Edward III. was not a great man like Edward I., but he won a conspicuous place in history by the extraordinary activity of his temperament, and the vigour and energy with which he threw himself into whatever work he set himself to do. He delighted in hunting and tournaments, was liberal, easy of access, good tempered, and kindly. He was not only a consummate knight, but a capable soldier, with the general's eye that takes in the points of a situation at a glance. His weak points were his extravagance, his love of frivolous amusement, his self-indulgence, and his disregard for his plighted word. His main ambition in life was to win fame and glory abroad, but he ruled England creditably, and made many concessions to his subjects' wishes in order to obtain supplies for carrying on his foreign wars. Like Edward I., he attempted far more than he was able to carry through; but it was only at the very end of his reign that his subjects realized that the popular and glorious king had failed in his chief ambitions.

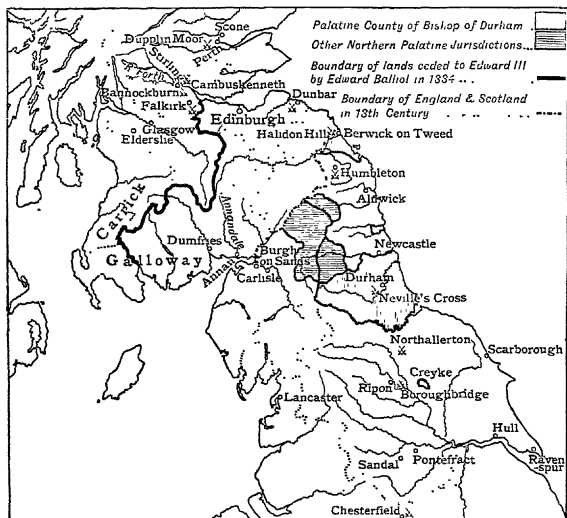
4. In the early years of his personal rule, Edward's chief object was to win back for England something of the greatness it had acquired under Edward I. He was bitterly irritated at the establishment of Scottish independence, and before long fortune gave him a chance of upsetting in an indirect way the treaty of Northampton. Robert Bruce died in 1329, and was succeeded by his son David. Edward III.'s

brother-in-law, who was a mere boy. Under his weak government troubles soon broke out in Scotland. A large number of Scottish barons who had opposed Robert Bruce had been driven into exile when Robert became king. They were called the *Disinherited*, and they saw in the minority of King David a chance of winning back their estates by force. At their head was the son of the deposed King John, Edward Balliol, who had not forgotten his father's claim on the Scottish throne. Edward III. gave them no direct help, as he feared to break wantonly the treaty of Northampton. However, he made no effort to prevent the Disinherited from collecting a little army, with which they invaded Scotland in 1332, under the command of Edward Balliol. The invaders won a decisive victory over the army of King David at *Dupplin Moor* near Perth. A few weeks later Balliol was crowned king of Scots at Scone. He gained recognition by Edward as king of Scots through promising to hold Scotland of him, and to cede him Berwick. The party of David, however, was not entirely crushed, and before the end of the year they surprised Balliol at Annan, and drove him back into England. His reign only lasted four months.

5. Edward III. now openly took up Balliol's cause, and in 1333 invaded Scotland to restore his vassal to his throne. His first step was to besiege Berwick, and the Scots forced Edward to fight a battle before he could secure the town. Halidon
Hill, 1333. This fight was fought at *Halidon Hill*, a short distance west of Berwick. The English men-at-arms dismounted and fought on foot after the Scottish fashion. Their tactics proved signally successful. The Scots were beaten, and next day Berwick opened its gates, to be for the rest of its history an English frontier town. Edward's action now showed that Balliol was but a tool in his hands. In 1334 he restored his namesake to his throne, but only on his agreeing to cede to England the whole of Lothian and the eastern part of Galloway. Any faint chance that Balliol had of success was completely destroyed by Edward's greediness. The Scots hated him as the betrayer of his country, and the English treated him as the puppet of their king. For many years he strove to make himself real master of that part of Scotland which Edward permitted him to claim. David was sent to France for safety, but most Scots still upheld him against the two Edwards. At no time did either Edward Balliol David finally
established
in Scotland. or the King of England effectively possess the Scottish lands they claimed as theirs. But their efforts to establish themselves involved the north in many years of bloodshed

and misery. At last, after Edward III.'s breach with France, David returned to Scotland and made himself king over the whole country. Thus Edward III. failed as signally as his grandfather in his efforts to conquer Scotland.

6. During the years of Edward's attempt on Scotland the



NORTHERN ENGLAND AND SOUTHERN SCOTLAND IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

relations of England and France became increasingly unfriendly. Causes of Edward complained that Philip VI. kept David at his the Hundred court, and openly took the side of the Scots against Years' War. the English. There were other difficulties about Gascony, where Philip VI., like Philip IV., was doing what he could to lessen the power of Edward as duke. It was, in fact, the impossible position of Edward in Gascony which caused the fundamental difference between the two nations. Edward could not abandon his ancient patrimony, and Philip could not give up the policy of every king since St. Louis, of gradually absorbing

the great fiefs in the royal domain. Besides this, there were many secondary causes of the war. One of these was Philip's support of the Scots. Another cause of dispute arose from the rival interests of England and France in Flanders. This county, though nominally a fief of France, was largely hostile to the French king. Flanders in those days was the chief manufacturing district in northern Europe, and its chief towns, Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres, were the best customers that England had. England in the fourteenth century was a purely agricultural and pastoral land. Its chief product was wool, which was exported to Flanders to be woven into cloth in its populous clothing towns. The great Flemish towns had liberties so extensive that they were virtually independent, both of their immediate master the count of Flanders, and of his overlord, the king of France. The count of Flanders called in the help of Philip VI. to subdue his unruly townsmen, and these in their turn appealed to Edward for help. The leader of the Flemish citizens was James van Artevelde of Ghent. He saw that the best hopes of Flemish municipal independence lay in a close alliance with England, and was eager to win over Edward to his side. Under his guidance the towns of Flanders drove away their count, and made a treaty with England. Philip deeply resented Edward's interference with his Flemish vassals. He was still more angry when Edward added to the Flemish alliance a close friendship with the Emperor Louis of Bavaria and the chief imperial vassals of the Netherlands. Louis of Bavaria, who had married Queen Philippa's sister, was now engaged in a fierce struggle with the Avignon popes, who had excommunicated and deposed him. Yet, in 1338, Edward visited Louis at Coblenz, on the Rhine, where he made a close alliance with him, and was appointed the emperor's vicar in the Netherlands. Thereupon the count of Hainault and Holland, brother-in-law of king and emperor alike, the duke of Brabant, and other Netherlandish vassals of Philip, took Edward's pay and agreed to help him against France. This alliance intensely annoyed the pope, who had long been making strenuous efforts to bring about peace. But the popes were now Frenchmen, and thought by England to be prejudiced in favour of France, so that the chief result of their interference was to make the papacy disliked in England. Besides all these troubles, there were many commercial disputes, and French and English sailors were already contending with each other at sea, as they had done in 1293.

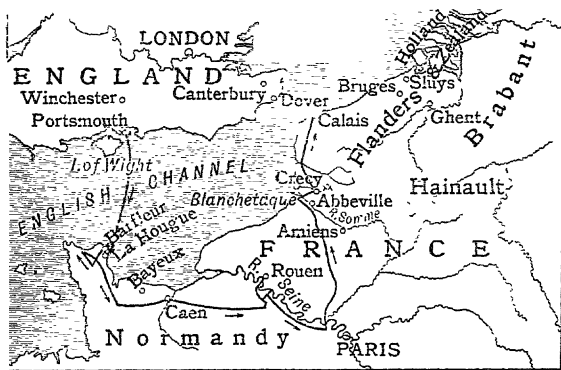
7. Under these circumstances both countries slowly drifted into

war, and the first open hostilities took place in 1337. When war had already become inevitable, Edward III. immensely complicated the situation by reviving the claims on the French crown which Isabella had advanced on his behalf at the time of the accession of Philip of Valois. At first these claims were not very seriously meant, and it is a mistake to suppose that they were the chief cause of the war. It was not until 1340 that Edward assumed the title of King of France, and then he did so simply to please the Flemings, who had scruples in fighting their feudal overlord, which disappeared when they persuaded themselves that Edward, and not Philip, was the real king of France. From that moment, however, Edward's pretensions became more important. The persistence of Edward and his successors in maintaining the claim made real peace impossible for many generations. The result was that the war which now began is known in history as the *Hundred Years' War*. Though fighting did not go on all that time without a break, England and France were for more than a hundred years generally unfriendly, and nearly always actually at war with each other. Even when peace was made, the claim was not dropped, and every English king down to George III. called himself king of France, and quartered on his shield the lilies of France with the lions of England. Edward's claim did not seem so unreasonable then as it seems to modern eyes, but the French rightly resisted it, as his success would have meant the subjection of their land to the rule of a foreigner.

8. War on a great scale began in 1339, when Edward led an English army to the Netherlands, and strove, with the help of his Flemish and imperial allies, to invade the northern frontiers of France. Neither Edward nor Philip ventured to fight a pitched battle, and Edward's German confederates were more anxious to take his pay than to do him real service. The only result of Edward's Netherlandish campaigns was to exhaust his resources and diminish his reputation.

9. The most decisive fighting during these wars was at sea. The French had planned a great invasion of England, and though this came to nothing, they collected a powerful fleet, which, in 1340, strove to prevent Edward's returning to the Netherlands to renew the campaign. The result of this was a great sea fight off the Flemish port of *Sluys*, in which the French navy was absolutely destroyed. This battle put

an end to all schemes of invasion, and gave the English for many years the command of the Channel. Henceforward Edward boasted that the king of England was lord of the sea. Yet even the glory of Sluys did not help Edward in his land campaign. Before the end of 1349 he made a truce with the French and returned to England. Though his people had granted him large supplies, he was almost bankrupt. He unfairly laid the blame of this on his ministers, the chief of whom was John Stratford, Archbishop of



THE CRECY CAMPAIGN, 1346.

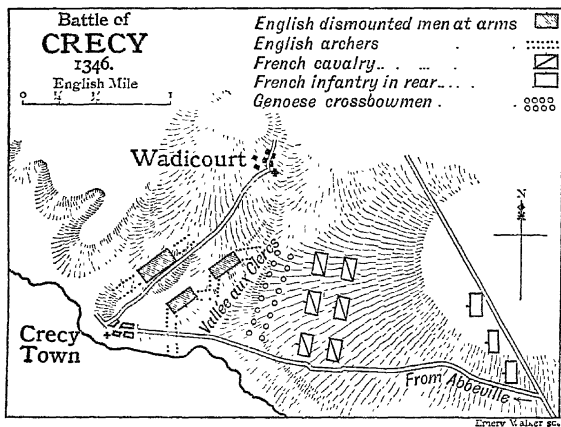
Canterbury. On his return to England he drove Stratford from power, and appointed an entirely new body of ministers.

10. Before the truce expired a fresh cause of difference arose between Edward and Philip. There was a disputed succession to the Duchy of Brittany, between John of Montfort and Charles of Blois. As Philip supported the claims of Charles of Blois, Edward upheld those of Montfort. Both kings went to Brittany to uphold their respective champions, and there fought campaigns that were almost as futile and expensive as the campaigns in the Netherlands. In 1345 direct war was renewed, and at first the chief fighting was in Gascony. Both countries frittered away their strength in desultory warfare, and very little came of it.

11. More serious results followed in 1346. In that year Edward led a great English army into Normandy, and took with him

his eldest son, Edward, Prince of Wales, a youth of sixteen, afterwards famous as the Black Prince. In July the English landed at La Hougue in the Cotentin, and marched through Normandy, plundering and devastating, and only meeting with serious resistance at Caen, which they captured. Thence they struck the left bank of the Seine, and advanced up the river almost to the gates of Paris. Philip gathered together a numerous force for the defence of his capital, and Edward was forced to retreat northwards, closely followed by the French king. At last he reached the river Somme, but he found the bridges guarded by the French, and was unable to get over the stream. There was grave danger of his being driven into a corner between the Somme and the sea, when he luckily discovered a ford, called Blanchetaque, by which the Somme was crossed.

12. The French were so close on Edward's heels that he was



obliged to turn and fight a battle in his own inheritance of Ponthieu. He took up a strong position on a low hill, with his right resting on the little town of *Crécy*, and his left on the village of Wadicourt. After the fashion learnt in the Scottish wars, the English knights and men-at-arms sent their horses to the rear and fought on foot, standing in close array,

and divided into three great divisions. Two of these were stationed on the crest of the hill, while the third was posted in the rear in reserve, under the king in person. The archers, who since Halidon Hill had been regarded as a very important element in the English army, were posted on the wings of each of the three divisions. The French took up their position on an opposite hill, separated from the English by a shallow waterless depression called the Vallée aux Clercs. Their numbers were much greater than those of the English, but they were much worse commanded and worse disciplined. They still fought in the old feudal fashion, set little store on their infantry, which they placed in the rear, and threw their main effort in a cavalry charge. The battle began in the afternoon of August 26. The French, who had marched all the way from Abbeville, were already weary, but their leaders were so confident of victory that they insisted upon attacking the English at once. The first hostilities proceeded from the advance of a force of Genoese crossbowmen, who were ordered to shoot their bolts against the English lines to prepare their way for the cavalry charge. But the crossbows had an inferior range to the English long bows, and, to make matters worse, the evening sun was shining behind the English lines right in the faces of the Genoese, many of whose weapons had, moreover, been made useless by a recent shower, which had wetted their strings. The result was that few bolts from the crossbowmen reached the English ranks, whilst the arrows of our archers soon threw the Genoese back in confusion. By this time the French cavalry had grown impatient of waiting. At last they rushed fiercely through the ranks of the unlucky crossbowmen and made their way through the valley towards the English lines. Again the archers threw the enemy into confusion, and though they made repeated charges, few of the French succeeded in crossing lances with the enemy. At one point only did they get near their goal, and that was on the English right, where the Prince of Wales was in command. A timely reinforcement saved the position, and the French retreated, protected, as the English boasted, by the rampart of the dead they left behind them. It was the greatest victory of the age, and won for the English a great reputation as warriors. Moreover, it proved conclusively that disciplined infantry could withstand a cavalry charge, and so taught all Europe the superiority of the tactics which the English had adopted.

13. So war-worn were the victors that all the immediate profit they could win was the power to continue undisturbed their march

to the sea coast. Instead, however, of returning to England, Edward laid siege to *Calais*, the most northerly town of the French king's dominions. He persevered in this siege for more than a year, and in 1347 the famine-stricken burgesses of Calais were compelled to open their gates to him. For more than two hundred years Calais remained an English town, and was of great importance, both as a fortress through which an English army might at any time be poured into France, and as a warehouse through which the weavers of Flanders were to draw their supplies of raw wool. Crécy and Calais were not the only triumphs of this glorious time. Edward's cousin, Henry, earl of Lancaster, son of the Earl Henry we have already mentioned, won decisive victories in Gascony at *Auberoche* and *Aiguillon*. David, king of Scots, who invaded England when Edward was fighting the Crécy campaign, was defeated and taken prisoner at the *battle of Neville's Cross*, near Durham. In 1347 Charles of Blois was beaten and captured in the *battle of La Roche Derien*, which secured for a time the establishment of Montfort's cause in Brittany. Yet in the midst of his career of conquest Edward concluded a new truce in 1347. His want of money and the need of repose account for this halt in the midst of victory. Yet the necessity of the truce showed that Edward had embarked upon a course far beyond his capacity. However many battles he might win, it was clear that he could never conquer all France.

14. Up to this point Edward's reign had been a time of great prosperity. Edward had, it is true, dissipated his resources in fighting the French and the Scots, but the country was sufficiently wealthy to bear its burdens without much real suffering. A war waged exclusively abroad did little direct harm to England, and offered a lucrative, if demoralizing, career to the soldiers, who received high wages and good hopes of plunder in the king's foreign service. The war was popular, and the English supremacy at sea did much to promote our foreign trade. But in 1348 a pestilence, known as the *Black Death*, which had already devastated eastern and southern Europe, crossed over the Channel and raged with great virulence in England until 1349. It is sometimes thought that a third of the population died of the Black Death, and the results of the visitation changed the whole character of English history.

15. The horrors of the plague could not destroy Edward's satisfaction in his victories. In the midst of the visitation, he

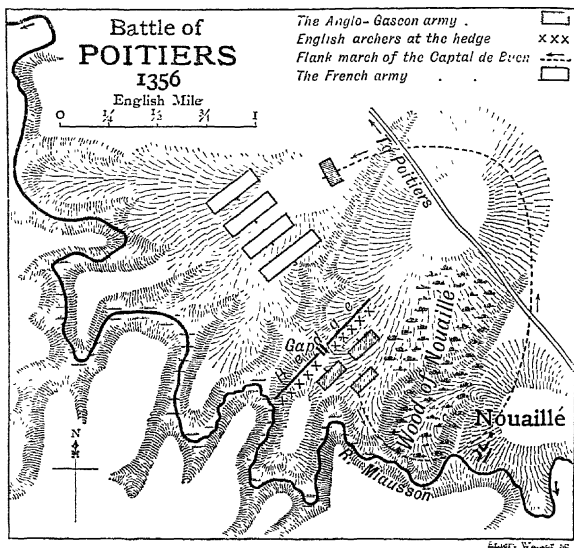
celebrated by magnificent feasts and entertainments the establishment of the *Order of the Garter*, the first and most famous of those orders of knighthood which delighted the chivalry of the fourteenth century. Neither the plague nor the truce entirely stopped the war, and there was much fighting, though most of it was indecisive and on a small scale. Gradually the main scene of operations shifted to the south, and in 1355 Edward sent the Black Prince to Gascony, which then became the chief theatre of events. In 1355 the Black Prince led a successful raid up the Garonne valley and penetrated as far as the shores of the Mediterranean. He returned loaded with plunder and glory, and, in 1356, started from Bordeaux in a similar marauding expedition over central France. Accompanied by the best knights of England and Gascony, he marched as far as the Loire, and then began to make his way back with his booty. Philip VI. had died in 1350, and his son, John, now ruled over France. The French king was as gallant a knight as the Black Prince, and pursued his foe with a great army in the hope of intercepting his retreat. Just as at Crécy, ten years before, the prince found himself forced to fight a battle with weary troops against enormous odds.

The Black
Prince in
Aquitaine,
1355-1356.

16. The scene of the action was a few miles south of Poitiers, on the banks of the little river Miausson. As at Crécy, Edward resolved to fight on the defensive; he stationed his army on the side of a hill which sloped down on the left towards the marshes of the Miausson. Some distance in front of the English position, a long hedge and ditch afforded an additional means of protection. It was broken by a gap, through which a farmer's track connected the fields on either side of it. The French had now learnt the English fashion of fighting on foot, but they did not fully understand English tactics, and took no pains to combine archers and crossbowmen with their men-at-arms. They mustered in four lines on the northern side of the hedge, and each line in succession strove to make its way through to attack the English on the further side. But the hedge was lined in force by the English archers, who shot down the enemy as they made their way in close order to the gap in it. However, the French fought desperately, and for long the fight was doubtful. A dexterous manoeuvre on the part of Edward at last secured him the victory. He ordered the Captal de Buch, the best of his Gascon leaders, to march, under cover of a hill, round the French position, and attack the enemy in the rear. This settled

Battle of
Poitiers,
1356.

the hard-fought day. Surrounded on every side, the French perished in the ranks or surrendered in despair. Among the prisoners was king John himself. Soon afterwards he was led



in triumph through the streets of London, and joined the king of Scots in the Tower.

17. The captivity of the king threw France into a desperate plight. Charles, duke of Normandy, son of King John, acted as regent, but the nobles and commons did exactly what they liked, and soon reduced France to a terrible condition of anarchy. In 1359 John made the treaty of London with Edward III., by which he surrendered to Edward in full sovereignty nearly all the lands which Henry II. had ruled in France. But the French would not accept so humiliating a treaty, and Edward led a new invasion out of Calais to compel them to agree to his terms. During the winter and spring of 1360 Edward marched at his will all over northern France, and attempted

The treaties of Brétigni and Calais. 1360.

persuaded the prince to restore him to his throne by force, and, in the spring of 1367, Edward made his way with an army through the pass of Roncesvalles in the hope of reconquering Castile for his ally. Beyond the Ebro at the village of *Nájera*, on April 3, he met Henry of Trastámara and Du Guesclin in battle, and won a complete victory over them. After this he restored Peter to the Castilian throne and returned to Aquitaine. But during the campaign the prince contracted the beginnings of a mortal sickness and lost the greater part of his army from disease. Henceforth misfortune dogged his whole career. In 1368 Henry of Trastámara returned to Spain, defeated and killed Peter, and established himself permanently as king of Castile. Thus the whole work of the prince in Spain was undone.

20. Up to the time of his Castilian expedition, the Black Prince's rule in Aquitaine had been fairly successful. It was popular with the towns, and especially with those like Bordeaux and Bayonne, which had been for a long time subject to the English dukes. His court at Bordeaux was one of the most brilliant and magnificent in Europe. Yet Edward could never win over the newly ceded districts, which had abandoned their French nationality with great reluctance, and were eagerly awaiting an opportunity for revolt. He looked with suspicion upon the great lords, and gave them much offence by limiting their privileges and excluding them from his confidence. Things became worse when the expenses of the Spanish campaign compelled Edward to impose fresh taxes on the Gascons. In 1368, he obtained from the estates of Aquitaine a new hearth-tax. The mass of the people paid this willingly, but the greater feudatories availed themselves of its imposition as a pretext for revolt. They appealed to Charles v. against the tax, and Charles accepted their appeal, declaring that his rights as overlord still remained, because all the formalities which should have followed the treaty of Calais had not been completed. Cited before the Parliament of Paris in 1369, the Black Prince replied that he would answer the summons with helmet on his head and sixty thousand men at his back. His father reassumed the title of king of France, and war broke out again.

21. The new struggle was fought with very different results from those of the earlier campaigns. Under the guidance of Charles v. and Bertrand du Guesclin, the French were much more wisely directed than before. They had learned from their failures how to defeat the English tactics, and they had the great advantages of always taking the offensive and having the people of the country

actively on their side. Du Guesclin's policy was to avoid pitched battles and encourage the English to waste their resources in fruitless forays. The Black Prince's health was now so bad that he could not mount his charger, but directed his army from a horselitter. His last martial exploit was the recapture, in 1370, of Limoges, which had been thrown off the English yoke. The whole population was put to the sword, and a few gentlemen alone were saved for the sake of their ransoms. Next year he went back to England for good. His successors were equally unfortunate. In 1373 his brother, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, marched with an army from Calais to Bordeaux, devastating France from end to end. John could not force the French to fight a battle, and before he reached his destination half his army had perished of hunger and cold, and in petty warfare. With the help of their Castilian allies the French defeated the English navy, and, by depriving their enemies of the command of the sea, made it very difficult for them to keep up communications between England and the armies in France. Among the most conspicuous of the French leaders was Sir Owen of Wales, a grand-nephew of Llewelyn ap Griffith, who posed as lawful prince of Wales, and sought to stir up revolt against Edward in his native land. After a few years of fighting, the English dominions in France were reduced to a few coast towns, and at last, despairing of success, Edward III. made a truce with the French, which lasted just long enough to allow him to end his days in peace. The only towns of importance still remaining in English hands were Calais, Cherbourg, Brest, Bayonne, and Bordeaux. The wave of French national feeling which had swept the English out of the acquisitions made in 1360 had almost engulfed Edward's hereditary possessions in Gascony. Crécy and Poitiers were completely avenged.

22. At home, as abroad, there is the same contrast between the later and the earlier part of Edward III.'s reign. The days of prosperity ended, as we have seen, with the Black Death of 1348 and 1349; and, when the people had partially recovered from the first visitation of the plague, others befel them that were scarcely less severe. The years 1362 and 1369 almost rivalled the horrors of the earlier outbreak. Great changes resulted from these plagues. The population declined so greatly that there were not enough labourers left to till the fields, or enough priests remaining to administer spiritual consolations to the dying. The immediate result of this was that

The fall of
the English
power in
France,
1369-1377.

The troubles
in England.

every sort of wages rose. The increased sums paid to workers had the effect of raising the prices of most commodities. Yet the plague had so much diminished the prosperity of the country that men found themselves hardly able to pay the prices and wages which they were accustomed to. In those days, if anything went wrong it was thought the business of the state to set it right, and parliament, in 1351, passed a law called the *statute of Labourers*, which enacted that both prices and wages should remain as they had been before the pestilence. It was found impossible to carry out this law. Labourers would not work unless they were paid the wages they asked for, and employers preferred to break the statute rather than see their crops perish in their fields for lack of harvest-men. All that landholders could do was to grow those crops which needed little labour. Corn-growing was therefore abandoned for sheep-farming and cattle-raising, and thus the amount of employment in the country became permanently less. Besides this, much dissension arose between employers and their workmen. The labourers complained of the harshness and cruelty of their masters, and the masters of the idleness and greediness of the workmen. The struggle of classes which resulted from this culminated, as we shall see, in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

23. The spirit of unrest was everywhere in the air, and the same generation that saw the social and economic changes which resulted from the Black Death, witnessed the beginning of religious discontent that soon threatened to break up the majestic unity of the Western Church. From 1305 to 1377 the popes lived at Avignon, and were generally Frenchmen under the control of the French king. The English hated the French so much that they looked with distrust upon French popes. Even under Henry III. there had been a great outcry against papal exactions, and this outcry became much stronger when there was a danger lest the money raised by the pope from English benefices found its way, indirectly, into the pockets of our French enemies. The system of papal provisions, by which the pope appointed his nominees to English benefices, had long excited deep discontent. In 1351 a law was passed called the *statute of Provisors*, which attempted to get rid of the abuse. It was followed in 1353 by another anti-papal measure, the *statute of Præmunire*, which was so called from the first word of the Latin writs issued to enforce the law. It forbade, under heavy penalties, Englishmen

The
Statute of
Labourers,
1351.

The Avignon
popes and
the Statutes
of Provisors
and Præ-
munire.

carrying lawsuits out of the country, and though the papal court was not specially mentioned, the measure was clearly aimed against it. If these laws had been strictly carried out, the papal authority in England would have been almost destroyed, but parliaments were content with making their protest, and Edward himself set the example of disregarding his own laws by asking the pope to make his friends bishops by the way of papal provision. There was no real desire to question the papal power as long as the popes did not go too far. Yet, however obedient most Englishmen still were to the pope's spiritual authority, they utterly repudiated the claims to feudal supremacy over England which the popes still made by virtue of John's submission. Edward III. absolutely refused to pay the tribute which John had offered to Innocent III., and in 1366 parliament declared that neither John nor any one else could put England into subjection without the consent of the people. The same rising national spirit which resented the interference of a foreign ecclesiastic with English affairs inspired the statute of 1362, which made English instead of French the language of the law courts. The tongue which, since the Conquest, had almost ceased to be the language of courts and nobles, was, as a result of the hatred of all things French, brought back into greater favour. The age of Edward III. was the age of Chaucer and Gower and Wycliffe.

24. The reign of Edward III. was not marked by any great changes in the constitution. Parliaments met very often, and the Edward III. king's need for money to carry out his foreign wars and his Par- made him willing to abandon many of his powers liaments. in return for handsome subsidies. Thus, in 1340, Edward accepted a statute which abolished the royal right of laying at his discretion taxes called *tallages* upon the royal domain. In 1341, as a result of his conflict with Archbishop Stratford, Edward was forced to recognize the claim of members of the House of Lords to be tried by their peers. In the same year he allowed parliament to nominate his ministers and examine the accounts of the national revenue. On this occasion, however, as soon as parliament was dissolved, Edward coolly revoked these laws as trenching upon his prerogative, and succeeded in persuading the next parliament, which met in 1343, to repeal them. The French war was so popular that at first parliament had willingly granted Edward supplies to carry it on, and Edward was shrewd enough to consult the estates about his foreign policy, because he saw that if they made themselves responsible for it they could hardly refuse to

pay its cost. In 1348, however, parliament answered his request for advice about the war by declaring they were too ignorant and simple to be able to counsel him in such high matters. After the troubles of the Black Death, the war became less popular, and parliament joyfully hailed every effort made to procure peace.

25. Edward and Philippa of Hainault were the parents of a large family, and the king's efforts to provide for his children without incurring too great expense for himself form Edward's an important element in his later policy. We have family seen how the prince of Wales was amply endowed settlement. with the new principality of Aquitaine. Besides this, the Black Prince held Wales, Chester, and Cornwall, while his marriage to his cousin, Joan of Kent, the heiress of Earl Edmund of Kent, executed in 1330, provided him with an additional English earldom. Edward introduced a new grade into the English peerage to increase the dignity of his son, by making the Black Prince *duke* of Cornwall. It was by the creation of new duchies and by rich marriages that Edward III. provided for his younger children. His third son, Lionel of Antwerp, married the heiress of the great Irish family of Burgh, earls of Ulster and Connaught, and was made duke of Clarence. After his marriage Lionel was sent to Ireland to represent his father. He found the English power at a low ebb, since Edward Bruce, brother of Robert, king of Scots, had made a valiant attempt to set himself up as king of Ireland against Edward II. Bruce was soon slain in battle, but English influence never recovered the blow he had dealt to it. To revive it now Lionel passed the *statute of Kilkenny* in 1366, which strove to prevent the Norman settlers in Ireland from adopting Irish ways and making alliance with the native Irish chieftains. The law was a complete failure, and Lionel soon returned to England in disgust. He died soon after, leaving as his heiress a daughter, Phillipa, whose marriage with Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, great grandson of the traitor Roger, made the great west country house of the Mortimers the representatives of the second line of the descendants of Edward III. The king's third surviving son, John of Ghent, or Gaunt, was married to Blanche, heiress of her father, Earl Henry, the last of the old line of earls of Lancaster, and John was made duke of Lancaster. The eldest son of John and Blanche, Henry, earl of Derby, the future Henry IV., married one of the heiresses of the Bohuns of Hereford, and Henry's uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, afterwards duke of Gloucester, married the other Bohun heiress. Edward's family settlement is of great

future importance, because it connected the royal family with many of the chief baronial houses, and apparently immensely increased its wealth and influence. Its ultimate result, however, was harmful to the power of the crown, as the descendants of Edward III. forgot their kinship with the king, and adopted the policy of opposition with which the houses into which they intermarried had long been associated.

26. Factions among his nobles and dissensions between his sons embittered the last years of Edward's reign. The Black Prince and John of Gaunt, who had disagreed with each other about the conduct of the war in France, transferred their rivalries to England, and became the heads of sharply marked parties in the council of the old king. The ill feeling which parliament had shown to the papacy in its legislation included within its scope the English church as well. The barons were jealous of the power of the higher clergy, and denounced their interference in politics. Up to this time some of the chief offices of state, such as that of chancellor, had almost invariably been held by a prominent bishop. However, in 1371, a group of courtiers procured the removal of the king's clerical ministers, and substituted laymen for them. The chief of the displaced ministers was William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester. It was natural that he and the other bishops should be henceforward in opposition to the government. Before long John of Gaunt became the leader of an anti-clerical court party, and for some years exercised a strong influence over his father, who was gradually falling into his dotage. John's chief helpers were Lord Latimer, a London merchant called Richard Lyons, and Alice Perrers, the greedy and unscrupulous mistress of the old king. Knowing that the higher ecclesiastics were bitterly opposed to him, John also struck up an alliance with a famous Oxford teacher named John Wycliffe, who had become conspicuous for his denunciation of the corruption of the clergy, and for teaching that priests should live lives of apostolic poverty and have nothing to do with politics.

27. The rule of John of Gaunt and the courtiers was neither honest nor successful, and an active opposition was formed of which the Black Prince and the Earl of March were the leaders. Strong feeling arose in the country against the men who had lost all France and brought England to bankruptcy and shame. This indignation found its expression in a parliament which met in 1376, and became famous as the

Good Parliament. Inspired by the Black Prince, the Earl Edmund of March, and the bishops, the House of Commons made a vigorous attack on the courtiers. It chose as its *speaker*, or spokesman before the king, Sir Peter de la Mare, steward of the Earl of March, a man who had boldness enough to say what was in his mind regardless of the good-will of the great. It accused Latimer and Lyons of taking bribes, and the House of Lords condemned them to imprisonment. These are the first examples of the process called *impeachment*, by which political offenders were accused by the Commons before the Lords. Parliament also removed Alice Perrers from court.

28. In the midst of these proceedings the Commons lost their strongest support by the death of the Black Prince. Lancaster now resumed his influence; the Good Parliament was dismissed, and, in 1377, a fresh parliament carefully packed with John's partisans reversed its acts. Parliament was thus silenced. The convocation of Canterbury remained bitterly hostile to John. Accordingly the duke met its opposition by calling John Wycliffe to his aid. Wycliffe's denunciations of the rich land-holding prelates were answered by an accusation for heresy being brought against him. Summoned before Bishop Courtenay of London to answer the charge, Wycliffe appeared in St. Paul's, supported by Lancaster and Henry Percy, one of Lancaster's chief friends. A violent scene took place in the cathedral between Lancaster and the bishop. The London mob took the part of Courtenay against the courtiers, and rose in a riot, pillaged John's palace, and forced him to flee from London. Soon after this stormy scene Edward III. died, on June 21, 1377. As he lay dying his courtiers deserted him, and Alice Perrers took to flight after robbing him of the rings on his fingers.

John of
Gaunt and
John
Wycliffe,
1378-1377.

Death of
Edward III.,
1377.

CHAPTER V

RICHARD II. OF BORDEAUX (1377-1399)

Chief Dates:

- 1377. Accession of Richard II.
- 1378. The Papal schism.
- 1381. Peasants' Revolt.
- 1384. Death of Wycliffe.
- 1388. The Merciless Parliament.
- 1396. The Great Truce with France.
- 1397. Richard's triumph over the Lords Appellant.
- 1399. Deposition of Richard II.

1. As the Black Prince had died before his father, his only son, Richard of Bordeaux, a boy ten years of age, succeeded Edward III. as Richard II. No regent was appointed, but, as in the latter years of Henry III.'s minority, the council of John of Gaunt. ruled in the king's name. This meant in practice that the preponderating influence was with John of Gaunt. The result was that the first few years of the new reign witnessed the continuance of the bad and unpopular government which had disgraced the close of the reign of Edward III. Heavy taxes were raised, but the people obtained little benefit from paying them. The nobles quarrelled fiercely with each other, and, on the expiration of the truce with France, the French plundered the English coasts and threatened the land with invasion. Luckily, however, for England, Charles V. died in 1380. His son and successor, Charles VI., was a boy like Richard, and the French soon had reason to say with the English, "Woe to the land when the king is a child." For some years the Hundred Years' War was suspended by reason of the weakness of both England and France.

2. It was a miserable time for Europe generally. In 1378 the papacy returned from Avignon to Rome, but the pope who had the courage to take this step died soon after he reached Italy. His successor, Urban VI., was an Italian, and likely to remain in Rome. Thereupon the French cardinals, who wished to keep the pope in their own country,

denied the validity of Urban's election, and chose another pope, named Clement VII. Europe divided itself between the two popes, and as the French and Scots favoured Clement, the English supported Urban. The result of this *Great Schism of the Papacy* was to discredit the popes, who had already lost much ground during the captivity at Avignon. The spirit of religious unrest that was already in the air spread widely, and led men to look closely into their beliefs. John Wycliffe had already made himself conspicuous as the ally of John of Gaunt against the over-wealthy prelates. Since the scene at St. Paul's in 1377, his views were becoming more and more antagonistic to those professed by the Church. In the year of the schism he began to raise doubts as to the truth of the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, or the change of the bread and wine in the Holy Communion into the Body and Blood of Christ, which the whole Church had accepted for many centuries. This open avowal of heresy lost Wycliffe the support of Lancaster and most of his powerful friends. Henceforth he sought to appeal to the people as well as to scholars and men of rank. He sent throughout the country disciples who were called his *poor priests*, and by this means his teaching was spread all over the land. Up to now he had written in Latin for scholars, but he henceforth set forth his teaching in English. He denied the authority of the papacy and of the clergy, and taught that *dominion was founded on grace*, by which he meant that power and property could only be rightly held by good men. He also encouraged men to seek for their religion in the Bible only. To make the Bible accessible, he, with the help of his friends, translated it from Latin into English. His teaching excited bitter hostility among the clergy, and in 1382 his opinions were condemned by a council of English bishops. Wycliffe still had many friends, and was very dexterous in explaining away his opinions. He was therefore set free, and spent the rest of his life at his country living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he died in 1384. His influence continued after his death. His followers, called *Lollards*, or babblers, spread widely, and, for the first time since the establishment of Christianity in England, there were many men who disbelieved in the teaching of the Church.

3. Four years after Richard's accession discontent came to a head in the *Peasants' Revolt* of 1381. The causes of this rising were numerous. The deepest of them lay in the changes which had affected society since the time of the Black Death. The demand for labour was still great, and the free labourers, who could hire themselves

The causes
of the
Peasants'
Revolt.

out where they would, were bitterly discontented with the laws which tried to keep down their wages. They had formed associations to defeat the statute of Labourers, and for a generation there had been much quarrelling between them and their masters. The grievances of the free labourers were, however, small as compared with the troubles of the serfs or *villeins*. In Norman times the mass of the people had, as we have seen, become villeins. During the fourteenth century the number of villeins was steadily decreasing, as many ran away from their lords, and many were set free, since lords had found that it paid them better to cultivate their lands with free labour, while the Church taught that it was a meritorious act to enfranchise a bondman. However, the strong demand for labour, which resulted from the decline of population after the pestilence, had retarded this movement towards freedom. When it became very difficult to obtain free labour, it was natural that the lords of serfs should exact to the uttermost the rights they still possessed of compelling their bondmen to work for them without pay. At the same time the villeins became more unwilling to give up so much of their time to their lords, when they saw that their free brethren could earn large wages without difficulty. The result was that the villeins were even more discontented than the free labourers, and both classes alike were ripe for revolt. Thus the unrest and discontent of Edward III.'s time still continued. It was increased by the struggles in the boroughs between the craftsmen of the guilds and the rich merchants, who kept the government of the towns in their own hands, and ruled harshly in the interests of their own class. Old soldiers who had come back from the French wars told the poor English how the men of Flanders had shaken off the yoke of their count, and had, by union and determination, won liberty for themselves. The friars still wandered through the land, teaching that Christ and His apostles had had no property, and denouncing the oppressions of the rich. Wycliffe's "poor priests" were now also traversing the country, maintaining their master's doctrine of dominion founded on grace and declaring that it was the duty of a Christian to deprive unworthy men of their offices and lands. John Ball, an Essex priest, made himself the mouth-piece of this widespread discontent. "We are all come," said he, "from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve. How can the gentry show that they are greater lords than we?" On every side the old social order was breaking up, and men were ripe for revolution.

4. Disgust at the bad government of John of Gaunt and the

council added political to social unrest. Heavy taxes were levied, though the people got nothing in return from them. Finally, in 1381, the imposition of a new *poll-tax*—that is, a tax levied on each individual in the community, brought the discontent to a head. The Kentish men were among the freest and most turbulent of Englishmen. There was no villeinage in Kent, but nowhere was the indignation at the badness of the government so deeply felt. Headed by Wat Tyler, the Kentish men refused to pay the poll-tax, rose in revolt, and marched in great numbers to London. At the same moment disturbances broke out all over England, as if in obedience to a common command. The most formidable were in the eastern counties, where the numerous serfs of great abbeys, like Bury St. Edmunds and St. Albans, rose against their monastic landlords and demanded their enfranchisement. Like the Kentish freemen, the villeins of the eastern shires also made their way to London. The rebels soon took possession of the capital, and wrought many outrages. They murdered some of the king's ministers, including the chancellor, Simon of Sudbury, the archbishop of Canterbury. They burned John of Gaunt's house, the Savoy Palace in the Strand, and declared they would have no king named John.

The
Peasants'
Revolt of
1381.

5. Richard II. was only sixteen years old, but he showed a courage and resolution that put to shame the weakness of his ministers. One day he met the rebels from the eastern counties at Mile End, agreed to give them charters of freedom, and persuaded the majority to go home. The Kentish men, however, remained in arms, and constantly perpetrated fresh outrages. Next day Richard went with William Walworth, the mayor of London, to treat with them in Smithfield. Tyler, the rebel leader, behaved with great familiarity, but Richard promised to accept most of his demands. Unluckily, one of the king's followers declared that Tyler was the greatest thief in Kent, and Tyler sprang upon him with his dagger. The mayor strove to protect the courtier, and a scuffle ensued between the two, in which Tyler was slain. The rebels drew their bows at the king, but Richard, riding up among them, declared, "I will be your captain; come with me into the fields, and you shall have all you ask." His presence of mind saved the situation, and gave time for the soldiers to surround the rebels and force them to lay down their arms. The troubles in London were thus ended, and all over the country the gentry, plucking up courage, set to work to put down the revolt systematically. The cruelties

The sup-
pression of
the revolt.

worked by the peasants in their brief moment of triumph were now more than revenged on them by their victorious masters. Even the king took part in punishing the rebels. He put John Ball to death at St. Albans, and revoked the charters of freedom which he had issued on the grounds that they had been obtained by violence, and that he had no power to interfere with the lord's property over his serfs. When parliament met it approved the king's action, and declared that it would never agree to the liberation of the villeins. However, a little later, the marriage of the king to Anne of Bohemia, daughter of the Emperor Charles iv., was made an excuse for extending a general pardon to all the rebels. Despite the apparent failure of the peasants, the revolt was not entirely without fruit. It taught the government and the gentry that it was dangerous to press the tenants too much, and, though for a time it probably made the conditions of the villeins worse, it led in the long run to the restriction of villeinage. Many landlords found that it was easier for them to set free their peasants and to accept money payment in lieu of their accustomed services. Within a hundred years of the Peasants' Revolt, villeinage had almost disappeared from England. Besides this something was done to remedy the misrule against which the Kentish men had so loudly protested. John of Gaunt was so unpopular that power slipped away quietly from him, and before long he betook himself to Spain, where he strove, with little result, to make himself king of Castile by reason of his marriage with Constance, the daughter of Peter the Cruel. His failure taught the king's council some measure of wisdom and prudence, and the country became somewhat better governed in the years succeeding the Peasants' Revolt.

6. The good hopes excited by Richard's courage in 1381 were not borne out by the events of the next few years. With plenty of ability, a strong will, and a high courage, Richard showed a passionate and hasty temper, and a greediness for power, which soon brought him into collision with his nobles. He was self-willed, crafty, and revengeful, and his love of pomp led him to waste large sums in keeping up an extravagant court. Distrusting the nobles, he gave his chief confidence to courtiers and favourites, who carried on the evil traditions of the court party which had excited the wrath of the Good Parliament. Prominent among his favourites was Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, whose ancestors had held that dignity since the days of Stephen, and whom Richard

The baronial
opposition
and Thomas
of Glou-
cester.

made duke of Ireland. His chief minister was the Chancellor, Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, whose grandfather had been a Hull merchant, and who had obtained his wealth by trade. Oxford and Suffolk soon became very unpopular, partly through their own fault, and partly because they were looked upon as the causes of the weak government and unconstitutional rule which still went on. The greater part of the nobles disliked them exceedingly, and joined together to put an end to their power. Thus the party of constitutional opposition was reformed to meet the encroachments of the court party. Its leader was Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, the youngest and most capable of the king's uncles. For the rest of his life Gloucester withstood Richard II. as Thomas of Lancaster had withstood Edward II.

7. Trouble began in 1386, when parliament demanded the dismissal of the chancellor. Richard ordered parliament to mind its own business, and insolently said that he would not dismiss the meanest scullion from his kitchen to please it. Thereupon the angry Commons impeached Suffolk, and forced Richard to submit. A committee of eleven nobles was appointed for a year, with powers so extensive that they remind us of the lords ordainers of Edward II.'s time. Richard was compelled to take an oath to accept any ordinances that the eleven might devise. For the moment the triumph of the opposition seemed complete. Their administration threw new vigour into the government. They revived the French war, and, in 1387, one of their number, Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, won a victory over the French fleet, which saved England from a threatened French invasion.

8. Richard was no weakling like Edward II., and soon began to take steps to win back his power. He released Suffolk, and took counsel with his judges as to the lawfulness of the committee of eleven. The judges declared that the commission was illegal because it infringed the royal prerogative. By his orders the duke of Ireland raised an army, and civil war between the king and the opposition broke out. However, Richard had acted too hastily in assertion of his independence. In December, 1387, the barons scattered Vere's troops at *Radcot Bridge*, over the upper Thames in Oxfordshire. When parliament met in February, 1388, the king was once more helpless in the hands of the opposition.

9. The victors showed such ruthlessness that this parliament, which was altogether on their side, became known in history as the

Merciless Parliament. In it an accusation of treason was raised by five baronial leaders against Suffolk, Ireland, and other chief friends

The Merciless Parliament and the Lords Appellant, 1388.

of the king. The charge was technically called an *appeal of treason*, and the five lords on that account were called the *Lords Appellant*. At their head were Gloucester and Arundel, the hero of the recent victory over the French. The other members were Thomas

Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, and Henry, earl of Derby, eldest son of John of Gaunt, who availed himself of his father's absence in Spain to identify himself with the traditional policy of his mother's family, the old line of earls of Lancaster. Parliament gladly accepted the appeal, and the lords condemned the courtiers as traitors. Suffolk and Ireland escaped punishment by flight abroad, but many minor royalist partisans were put to death. Richard avoided deposition by bending before the storm. He was, however, strictly subjected to a council, and in this body the Lords Appellant ruled supreme.

10. Richard never forgot nor forgave the humiliations inflicted on him by the appellants. Experience had, however, shown him the

Richard's prudence.

uselessness of hasty action, and he quietly waited for his revenge. After more than a year he began to reassert himself. On May 3, 1389, he asked Gloucester

in the council chamber how old he was, and was told that he was twenty-two. "Since I am of age," he replied, "I am old enough to rule my people. Hitherto I have lived under governance, now I will govern." He then dismissed the appellants from power, but he prudently called into office William of Wykeham, the old bishop of Winchester, and other magnates who sympathized with the constitutional party. With great wisdom he made no attempt to recall his exiled friends, and before long restored some of the appellants to their places on the council. John of Gaunt now came back from Spain. He had learnt discretion by experience, and gave his nephew good advice. So judicious was the policy of the crown that the appellants had no chance of withstanding Richard's action. For the next seven years quiet and good government was maintained at home. Old laws, such as the anti-papal statutes of Provisors and Præmunire were revived, and useful new laws were passed. A truce was made with the French and Scots, so that England enjoyed peace, abroad as well as at home.

11. During this period Richard's first wife, Anne of Bohemia, died without children. So friendly now were Richard's relations with France that, in 1396, he married Isabella, daughter of

Charles VI., the French king, and made a truce for twenty-eight years. Though the new queen was only a child of seven, French influence henceforth became strong in Richard's councils. Always anxious to be a despot, Richard became eager to abandon constitutional courses and make himself as thoroughly master of his subjects as was his father-in-law, the French king.

The Great
Truce and
the French
marriage,
1396.

12. The party of the Lords Appellant seemed hopelessly broken up. John of Gaunt's influence had brought Henry of Derby round to the court party, and Nottingham also had deserted his former friends. Gloucester, Warwick, and Arundel still persevered in their ancient policy, and with them was associated Arundel's younger brother, Thomas Fitzalan, archbishop of Canterbury, commonly called Archbishop Arundel. After nine years, Richard's wrath against the appellants was still unsatisfied, and in 1397, he thought he was strong enough to wreak his long-deferred vengeance. Rumours that Gloucester was plotting against him gave Richard an excuse for action. He suddenly arrested Gloucester, Warwick, and Arundel, and a group of royalist barons, one of whom was Nottingham, appealed the three prisoners of treason. Their trials took place in the parliament which met in September. This body was carefully packed by the king, and overawed by a body of two thousand archers from Cheshire, wearing the king's cognisance of the white hart. The three lords were condemned as traitors, and Arundel was beheaded. His brother the archbishop was banished. Warwick was pardoned in return for an abject submission, and Gloucester was privately murdered at Calais, where he had been confined under Nottingham's charge. The acts of the Merciless Parliament were repealed, and the estates of the traitors divided among the king's friends. The turncoats, Derby and Nottingham, were rewarded for their complaisance by being made dukes of Hereford and Norfolk. The royalist restoration was completed at a second session of the parliament, held at Shrewsbury, when the king was granted a revenue for life, and a committee of eighteen persons appointed to deal, after the dissolution, with petitions which had not been answered during the session. Richard's enemies saw in this latter step an effort of the king to carry on indefinitely the powers of this subservient parliament through the committee of eighteen, and believed that he was resolved to do without parliaments for the future.

The royalist
reaction,
1397.

13. Richard's position was now so menacing that the new duke

of Norfolk took the alarm. He told Hereford that Richard had not yet forgiven them their share in the work of the appellants, and

The banishment of Norfolk and Hereford, 1398. urged him to unite with him against the king. Hereford told the whole story to Richard, and Norfolk declared that it was all an invention of Hereford's. A deadly quarrel henceforth divided the two old associates.

and they were ordered to prove their truthfulness by trial by battle. The fight was arranged to take place at Coventry on September 12, 1398. Just before the duel began, the king stopped the fight and banished both combatants, Hereford for ten years, Norfolk for life. But while Norfolk was treated with every severity, Hereford was still regarded with comparative favour. His term of exile was cut down to six years, and he was promised that, in the event of his father dying, he should forthwith inherit the duchy of Lancaster. Thus even the appellants who had deserted their old side came within the scope of the king's vengeance. Richard's triumph was now complete. He ruled England with the help of flatterers and favourites, and declared "that the laws were in his mouth or in his breast, and that he alone could change the statutes of his realm." His Cheshire archers maltreated his subjects at their will, and a veritable reign of terror proclaimed the reality of the new despotism. When John of Gaunt died, early in 1399, Richard and the committee of parliament withdrew the permission granted to Hereford to receive his father's succession in his absence.

14. So secure did Richard now feel himself, that in May, 1399, he crossed over to Ireland, and busied himself with a vigorous

The Lancastrian revolution of 1399. attempt to restore the waning power of England in that island. In July, Henry of Hereford and Archbishop Arundel landed with a small force at Ravenspur, on the Humber. Henry declared that he had only

come to claim his duchy and to drive away the favourites who had taught the king to play the despot. Many of the northern lords flocked to his standard, among them being Henry Percy, recently made earl of Northumberland, the old ally of John of Gaunt. Henry then marched southwards with a constantly increasing army. Before long he was joined by the regent, his uncle the duke of York. He captured Richard's chief ministers at Bristol and put them to death. With his growing power the invader enlarged his ambitions, and began openly to aim at the crown. Meanwhile Richard returned from Ireland and marched through North Wales to Conway. These tidings brought Henry northwards again to Chester. But Richard

had alienated every class of his subjects as signally as Edward II. had done. Finding that he had no backing, he submitted to his cousin at Flint, whence he was taken to London as a prisoner. Parliament then met, and Richard was forced to surrender the throne. Next day his abdication was read in parliament, which had assembled in a great hall before an empty throne. Henry of Lancaster sat in his place as duke, but before long he rose and claimed the throne, as being descended from Henry III., and "through the right which God had given him by conquest, when the realm was nearly undone for default of governance." Parliament rapturously applauded this, and he sat down on the throne as Henry IV. Next year it was given out that Richard had refused his food, and died of self-inflicted starvation in his prison at Pontefract. There is not much doubt but that his end was hastened by violence, but the circumstances of his murder were so obscure that his partisans long believed that he was still alive, and an impostor who assumed his name was for a time treated as Richard by the Scottish enemies of England.

CHAPTER VI

BRITAIN IN THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

1. IN the beginning of the thirteenth century the Angevin despotism was at the highest point of its power. It was broken down by the calamities of the reign of John, and replaced by something quite different during the reigns of John's son and grandson. The fourteenth century saw the working out in detail of the principles laid down in the days of Henry III. and Edward I. The result of this process was that England became a national state, governed by a strong monarch, who was in his turn controlled by a popular and representative parliament. The period which we now have to study is that of the formation of the English nation and of the English constitution. It was in these days when the state of society which we call *mediæval* reached its culminating point. Not only were the state and the constitution as vigorous as the times permitted: mediæval religion, science, literature, life, trade, and society alike attained their highest perfection.

2. In matters of state the king still governed the country, and was expected to use all the power which the constitution gave him. The king. The ministers of the crown were chosen by him, and were responsible to him alone. It was only when a weak or incompetent monarch was on the throne that the barons took the executive power out of his hands and transferred it to such a body as the Fifteen of 1258, the Lords Ordainers, or the Lords Appellant. Yet even an Edward I. was expected to rule with some regard to the opinion of his subjects, and in particular the views of the mighty barons who claimed to be the natural-born counsellors of the crown, and its partners and fellow-workers in determining the policy of the nation. After the reforms of Edward I. had destroyed the political power of feudalism, the barons found it increasingly expedient to work through the means of parliament.

It is as the leaders of public opinion as expressed by parliament that the nobles now held the great position which they still retained in the English state.

3. *Parliament* in the early days of Henry III. was merely another name for the Norman Great Council of the tenants-in-chief. Since the days of Simon of Montfort it became usual to strengthen the baronial element by associating with it the representations of the shires and boroughs. After Edward I.'s time the only body to which the

The Parlia-
ment of
the Three
Estates.

name of parliament rightly belonged was the representative assembly of the three estates, and after 1322 no law was regarded as valid unless it had been approved by this body. By the reign of Edward III. the lower clergy had ceased regularly to send their representatives to parliament. This made it easy for the higher clergy, the bishops, and abbots, to take their places along with the secular magnates. The result was the creation of the modern House of Lords, which thus represented both the estate of the nobles and, to some extent, the estate of the clergy. The third estate now exclusively formed the House of Commons. Cut off from the assembly of the nation, the lower clergy were content to meet in their clerical assemblies, which were summoned for each province by the archbishops of Canterbury and York. These provincial synods were called the *convocations* of Canterbury and York. The king used them to raise taxes from the clergy, but properly speaking they were no part of parliament. So long as the king got enough money from the clergy, he was indifferent whether it was voted him by an ecclesiastical or a political assembly.

Convoca-
tion.

4. The *House of Lords* of the fourteenth century consisted of the *lords spiritual and temporal*. The former included all the *archbishops* and *bishops*, and a considerable number of *abbots* and *priors*, the heads of the more important monasteries. For most of the middle ages the clerical

The House
of Lords.

members formed a majority of the House. The lay peers were, up to the reign of Edward III., either earls or barons. The *earls* were seldom more than a dozen in number, and were in nearly every case men of vast wealth and territorial influence. They were the natural leaders of the baronage, and were still looked upon as officials as well as mere dignitaries. The lay *barons* of the fourteenth century were less than a hundred in number, and were always tending to become less numerous. Both earldoms and baronies had become by this time strictly hereditary. Under

Edward III. new grades of the peerage were added, such as *duke*, *marquis*, and *viscount*. This tended somewhat to depress the dignity of the earl, as he now ranked after the duke and the marquis, and the number of earldoms became somewhat greater.

5. The *House of Commons* consisted of two *knights of the shire*, chosen by the county court of each English county, and of two *citizens* or *burgesses*, elected by the courts of their respective cities and boroughs. The two great *palatine counties* of Cheshire and Durham sent no representatives, as they were so fully under the control of their earl and bishop that they were for most purposes outside England altogether. Under Edward III. Lancashire also became a palatine county, but having already sent knights and burgesses to parliament, it continued to do so as before. Wales, both the Principality and the March, was also unrepresented in parliament, save on two occasions under Edward II. Though ruled by the English crown, Wales was no part of the English realm. In practice the sheriffs, who returned both the knights and the burgesses, had a good deal to do with determining which individuals should be chosen. The king decided which boroughs should be asked to appoint representatives, and as the sending of members was thought a burden rather than a privilege, towns were often anxious to avoid having to make an election. The result was that the number of boroughs was constantly fluctuating. As parliament became stronger, it suited the king's interest to summon burgesses from small places under his control, as he had power of influencing members so selected. Thus, even in early times there were many parliamentary boroughs which were not places of any importance. Both counties and boroughs paid wages to support the members they sent to parliament. The knights of the shire, who in practice represented the country gentlemen or smaller landholders, were the more important element of the House of Commons. They had greater wealth, a higher social position, and were more interested in public events. The citizens and burgesses were generally content to follow their lead. But even the knights were not always capable of independent action. As a rule, the opposition to the crown was stronger among the Lords than the Commons, and the Commons were largely in the habit of looking up to the peers for guidance. This is seen very clearly in the debates of the Good Parliament of 1376.

6. The powers of parliament were very considerable. It was on the petition of the estates that the king drew up the *statutes* or *acts of parliament*, so that no new law could be promulgated

except on their initiative. The Commons were especially concerned in the finances of the nation. As most taxes were paid by them, they were naturally anxious that they should have control over the king's expenses. By the fourteenth century, it was considered unlawful for the king to raise general taxes which had not been granted by the Commons, though the clergy in their convocation also granted money payable by the clergy only. The Commons also had the right of petitioning the crown and unfolding all their grievances and complaints against the king's government. The Lords joined in most of this work, but they also exercised judicial functions, in which the Commons refused to take any part. A wise king took care to keep on friendly terms with his parliament, and even strong rulers were often forced to give up power that they cherished to please it.

Powers of
Parliament

7. The old institutions of the twelfth century still went on, though with diminished vitality. *Great Councils* of the nobles still sometimes assembled, but as they could not grant money, they were of little use to the king. More important than these occasional assemblies was the permanent council of the king, called sometimes the *Concilium Ordinarium*, and later the *Privy Council*. This was a standing body of the king's ministers, judges, courtiers, and personal friends, which accompanied him in his constant journeys, and gave him advice as to the conduct of affairs of state. As many of its members were great barons and bishops, the king's council could sometimes take up a fairly independent line, though it was mainly a consultative rather than a directing body. With the help of his council the king governed the country. As time went on the council began to encroach upon the powers of parliament. In particular, it exercised considerable judicial as well as administrative authority. Though it was not supposed to legislate, it published *ordinances* that every one had to obey, and which were laws in everything but name. An able king made his council reflect his own will. Under a weak king or during a minority, the council became the battle-ground of contending factions, and acted very much as it liked.

The King's
Council.

8. The *law courts* took their modern shape by the time of Edward I. There were three *common law courts*, the *King's Bench*, the *Court of Common Pleas*, and the *Court of Exchequer*. The first and third of these were descended from the *Curia Regis* and *Exchequer* of Norman times, but they had ceased to be chiefly concerned with politics and finance, and were now mainly busy

with holding trials and pronouncing judgments. Cases which the common law could not deal with, or cases where the common law was too harsh and narrow, were referred to the *Court of Chancery* under the Chancellor. This gradually became what was called a *Court of Equity*, wherein the rigid doctrines of the common lawyers were brought into harmony with men's natural sense of justice. All through this period the lawyers were powerful, rich, and numerous. In the thirteenth century many lawyers in the king's courts were clergymen. By the fourteenth the lawyers had become a lay profession, with a strong corporate spirit and fixed traditions of their own. Great schools of law grew up in London called the *Inns of Court*, which took the place of the universities as places of study for English law. Besides the king's lawyers and courts there were still the *lawyers and courts of the Church*, which exercised such extensive powers that the king and his lawyers looked upon them with the utmost suspicion.

9. The religious and intellectual movements of the twelfth century yielded their finest fruits during the period now before us. The Church was at the height of its power and influence during the thirteenth century. Though many individual churchmen, like Langton or Grosseteste, were patriotic Englishmen, the Church as an institution was not national. It was the chief representative of that cosmopolitan ideal which still looked upon the nations of the civilized world as part of a single Christian commonwealth. Of this great power the pope was the recognized head, and for nations like England the only head, since the power of the emperor had never been real outside Germany and Italy, and after the fall of Frederick II. had ceased to be effective even in those countries. The pope was the *universal bishop* of Christendom, and for England he was, for most of the thirteenth century, the feudal overlord as well. Though his unlimited authority, especially in politics, at last provoked a strong reaction, there was no one at this period who ventured to question his ecclesiastical omnipotence.

10. A great religious revival in the early years of the thirteenth century emphasized the strength and authority which the Church still exercised over men's minds. Like all mediæval religious movements, it took the shape of a new development of monasticism. Vast as had been the influence of the Cistercians and Regular Canons in the monastic reformation of the twelfth century (see p. 154), the new orders had not escaped the dangers against which their rules had been a

St. Francis
and the
Mendicant
Friars.

protest, and their very wealth and authority exposed them to all the temptations of pride and worldliness. Against all the evil tendencies of the times a vigorous reaction was embodied in the life and work of St. Francis of Assisi. A young Italian gentleman, Francis forsook his father's heritage and devoted his life to the care of the poor, the sick, and the neglected. He gave out that he had wedded the lady Poverty as his bride, and taught the followers who soon gathered round him that they must literally live, like Christ and the apostles, lives of absolute self-renunciation. He thus became the founder of a new order, to which he gave the name of the *Friars*, or brothers, or, as he called them in his humility, the *Minorites*, or Lesser Brethren. The fame of their leader also caused the saint's followers to be called *Franciscans*, while the rough garb of undyed wool which they wore also led the people to speak of them as the *Grey Friars*. Francis' first principle was that of absolute poverty. The monks had taken the vow of poverty, but they interpreted it as meaning individual poverty, and the monastery could hold as much land as it could get, though each monk could possess nothing. To Francis this was not enough, and he ordered his followers so to understand their vow that they were bound to corporate as well as individual poverty. They were therefore called the *Mendicant Friars*, because, having no goods of their own, they gained their bread by begging from the faithful. So beautiful was the character of St. Francis, and so wonderful the work of his followers, that many other orders of friars were formed upon the model which he suggested. The chief of these was the *Order of Preachers*, called the *Black Friars* from the black hood they wore over their white dress, or the *Dominicans*, from their founder St. Dominic, a Spanish canon regular, who had devoted his life to preaching the doctrines of the Church and winning back the heretic and the infidel to its fold. Inspired by Francis and Dominic, the *Mendicant orders* worked a wondrous change for the better in the religious life of Europe.

11. In 1221 the Dominicans first came to England, and in 1224 they were followed by the Franciscans. They established their first convents at London and Oxford, and rapidly spread all over the country. Their piety, devotion, and sincerity soon won for them numerous disciples among all ranks of Englishmen. They laboured for the salvation of souls, the care of sickness, and the relief of distress. They ingratiated themselves with the rich as well as with the poor. Henry III. and Edward I. selected friars as their confessors, and

The Franciscans and Dominicans in England.

Simon of Montfort and Grosseteste were among their chief supporters. A special field for their labour was the crowded suburbs of the greater towns, where the people lived in ignorance, squalor, and vice. They erected in the chief towns their spacious but plain churches, adapted for preaching to large congregations. Unlike the monks, who withdrew themselves from the world, they lived in the world and tried to make it better. They had many enemies, as for example the lazy parish clergy whose work they did, and the monks and canons who envied their zeal and popularity. As time went on they fell away from their early activity, and often became corrupt. Yet down to the time of the Reformation the friars remained the chief teachers of religion to the poor. Hardly less important was their influence on the thought and learning of their age. A large proportion of the professors of theology at the universities were Mendicant Friars.

12. The universities, which began in the twelfth century, became exceedingly flourishing in the thirteenth. In the reign of

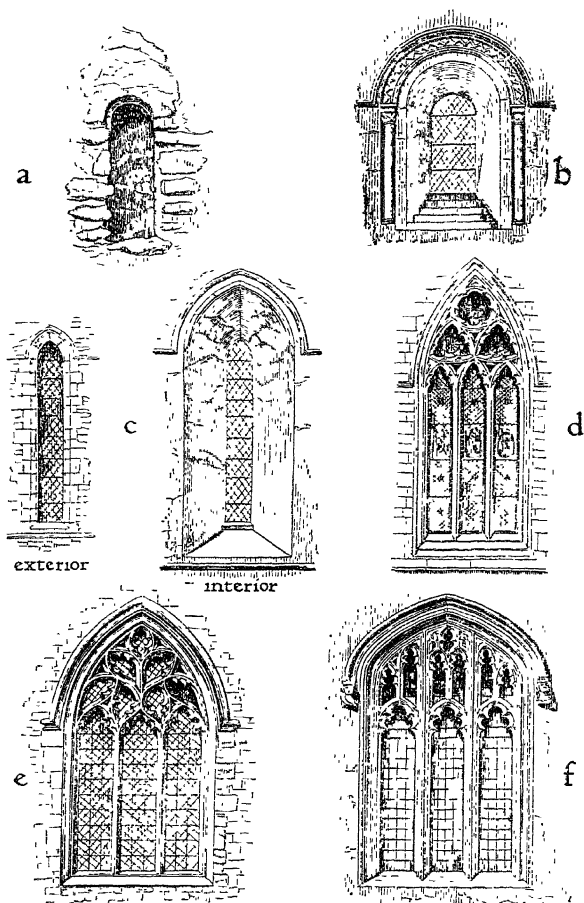
The Uni-
versities. Henry III., Oxford became one of the chief centres of study in Europe, and a second English university had arisen at Cambridge, though this was less important than Oxford for the rest of the Middle Ages. Paris still remained the greatest university of the West, and many English scholars still studied there. All classes of society were represented among the students. There were rich noblemen living in their own houses with a band of servants, while many scholars were so poor that they had to beg for their living. There was plenty of freedom and activity, but little order and discipline. All the scholars ranked as clerks, and had the privileges of clergy; but this did not prevent them rioting, drinking, and fighting with the townsfolk. All lectures were in Latin, and the teachers were those students who had completed their courses, and so became doctors or masters. There were five *faculties*, or branches of study—*Theology*, *Civil Law*, *Canon Law*, *Medicine*, and *Arts*. Most scholars began with arts, that is, grammar, philosophy, and mathematics. It took seven years' study before a student could become a *Master* or *Doctor of Arts*, and then he was compelled to stay for a time at the university and teach others. Some Masters of Arts also studied in one of the other or higher faculties.

13. After the coming of the friars, Oxford became much more important than before. In particular, the friars devoted themselves to the study of theology, which worldly men neglected in favour of law and medicine because these opened up better prospects of success

in their careers. The chief thinkers in philosophy and theology were called *schoolmen*. Among them a large proportion came from Britain, such as Alexander Hales, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, and Robert Kilwardby and John Peckham. The two Mendicant friars who became in succession archbishops of Canterbury under Edward I. The example of Kilwardby and Peckham shows how the Universities opened up brilliant positions for poor men of ability. Never were men of learning more powerful and influential than in the great days of the schoolmen.

14. As time went on, rich men gave lands and money to the universities to help forward poor students and unpopular studies. In particular, small societies were set up within the universities called *colleges*, where buildings were erected in which scholars could be supported while devoting themselves to study. The first important college was *Merton College* at Oxford, set up by Walter of Merton, chancellor of Henry III. In the fourteenth century there were many such foundations, both at Oxford and Cambridge. By this time the universities were losing some of their first energy and freedom, but they still played a considerable part in the life of the nation. It was at Oxford that John Wycliffe first taught those new views about religion which were to make so great a stir all over Christendom. But the times were not ripe for so thorough-going a reformer as Wycliffe, and the end of the fourteenth century saw the Church restored to much of its former power.

15. Gothic architecture, like the universities, began in the twelfth century, and attained its full glory in the thirteenth. At first the English had built much upon the lines of those who had first created the Gothic style in France, but under Henry III. English Gothic struck out ways of its own. The so-called *Early English* fashion of building, with its lancet windows, clustered shafts, square east ends, and delicacy of detail is best exemplified in Salisbury Cathedral, which altogether dates from the reign of Henry III. A comparison between it and the cathedral of Amiens, the chief work of contemporary French art, will well illustrate the difference of plan and construction between English and French Gothic of the best period. Yet the French tastes of Henry III. have given us an opportunity of studying the French style in our own land. His favourite foundation of Westminster Abbey reproduced on English soil the towering loftiness, the vaulted roofs, the short choir, and the ring of absidal chapels



SOME FORMS OF MEDÆVAL ARCHITECTURE.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| a. Anglo-Saxon. | b. Norman. | c. Early English. |
| d. Geometrical Decorated. | e. Flowing Decorated. | f. Perpendicular. |

(From Parker's "Glossary of Architecture," 1850.)

of the great French minsters. As the century advanced some of the fashions of the French builders, notably as regards window-tracery, were taken up in England. The early days of Edward I. mark the beginning of the so-called *Decorated* style. The earlier form of this, characterized by large windows adorned with elaborate tracery marked out in *geometrical* patterns, is well exemplified in the *angel choir* of Lincoln, built about 1280 to contain the shrine of St. Hugh, who himself erected the westerly part of the choir of the same cathedral. Later Decorated is called *flowing*, because the patterns of the window-tracery take wavy or flowing lines, such as can be seen in the nave of York minster. In Exeter Cathedral, which is almost entirely of the Decorated period, we can best study the development in succession of both the geometrical and decorated types of tracery. Side by side with these changes, the building as a whole became more elaborately decorated, and the mouldings became enriched with carved flowers and delicate carved leafwork. As time went on the decoration became excessive, and masked or impaired the solidity of the constructive parts. When ornament thus became used for its own sake, the spirit of Gothic architecture was beginning to decay. By the reign of Edward III. the last and most peculiarly English type began. This is called the *Perpendicular* style, and is characterized by the great use made of right angles and upright lines, and in particular by the rigid and straight lines of its window tracery. The arches became gradually flattened instead of pointed; the windows and doors became square-headed; and walls were enriched by flat panelling instead of the arcading of the earlier styles. The earliest examples of Perpendicular are to be seen in the choir of Gloucester Cathedral and the nave of Winchester Cathedral, both built under Edward III., the latter by William of Wykeham. It is a noticeable feature of both these buildings that their architects did not erect them afresh, but recased and adapted the old Norman buildings, toning down and hiding the massive romanesque structure by their new work.

16. Castle-building followed similar changes. The stern simplicity of the Norman castle had already given place to the newer style which began with Château-Gaillard in Normandy, and which is seen in its perfection in the castles such as Carnarvon, Conway, Harlech, and Beaumaris, erected by Edward I. to ensure the subjection of the mountaineers of North Wales. The castles of this period were often built after what is called the *concentric* fashion, and were characterized by

Decorated,

And Perpendicular.

The concentric castle.

successive lines of defence, each roughly radiating from a common centre. The keep, the special feature of Norman strongholds, was suppressed altogether, and replaced by many lofty towers erected along the lines of the successive circuits. The most perfect example of the type is perhaps found in the castle of Caerphilly, erected by Gilbert, earl of Gloucester, Edward I.'s rival and son-in-law, in his Marcher lordship of Glamorgan. After this period castle-building, unlike church-building, became much less frequent. By the fourteenth century England had become so peaceable that noblemen had no longer any need to erect castles to live in, but could look to comfort and convenience as well as to safety from attack. The improved condition of society is seen in the greater stateliness and beauty of domestic and civil architecture, which were now far more important than in previous ages.

17. Arms and armour became, like buildings, more complicated and costly. Great pains were taken to perfect the machines by which castles were assaulted, and ponderous instruments, such as the *trébuchet*, could hurl huge stones a great distance by means of an elaborate system of pulleys and counterpoises. Before the middle of the fourteenth century the use of *gunpowder* became known, and the earliest artillery was designed. These cannons were cumbersome and ineffective weapons, which, if sometimes dragged about on a campaign, as at Crécy, were more often used for siege purposes than in the open field. Armour changed greatly in character during the fourteenth century, as gradually solid plates of steel supplemented the *chain-mail* of the thirteenth century.

The knight of the age of Edward III. covered his coat of mail with a breastplate of richly embossed and decorated steel, and wore *brassards*, *cuisseards*, *jambards*, and other plates of metal to protect his arms and legs. Over his armour he still donned a *surcoat*, which, having been long and loose in the thirteenth century, became short and close-fitting about the time of the advent of plate-armour. On this and on his shield was embroidered or painted the knight's *arms* or device.

Every knightly house possessed by the fourteenth century its hereditary arms, and a special science called *heraldry* grew up, which explained the differences between the arms of various noble families. The *tournaments*, which, though condemned by the Church, remained

very popular, kept the knight in exercise, and gave him chances of glory even in peace time. After Bannockburn

The siege-train and the beginnings of cannon.

Plate armour.

Tournaments.

and Crécy had rung the knell of the ancient fashion of fighting on horseback in the field, the old-fashioned tilting on horseback with lances was still practised in the tournament. The tiltyard did much to spread the *chivalry* which was so marked a feature of the age of Edward III. This was further kept up by the *orders of knighthood*, of which Edward's Order of the Garter was the first example. All knights belonged to an international brotherhood of arms, and if their pride of caste made them often contemptuous of the common people, it did good service in promoting kindly feeling between kings, barons, and simple country gentlemen. There was no royal caste in the fourteenth century, and the country squire, who was a knight, had much in common with his brother knight, the king or the great earl. Yet social distinctions no longer counted for much in serious warfare. The archer won battles more than the mail-clad knight and squire.

Unlike the man-at-arms, the bowman went to the fight unprotected except by his steel cap and leather jerkin, and save for his long bow of yew and his arrows, a yard long, tipped with bright steel, his only weapons were his sword and buckler. The mobility thus gained compensated to some extent for the lack of protection afforded by body-armour.

18. Much that we have described was common to all Western Christendom. Every country had its representative system of estates, its king and barons, its lawyers, churchmen, and friars. The universities knew no distinction of nationality, and Gothic architecture, the baronial castle, the equipment of the warrior, and the brotherhood of chivalry were shared equally by every nation with which Englishmen were brought into contact. Even the national movement was common to most of the kingdoms of the West, and the thirteenth century saw the growth of the French and Spanish as well as of the English and Scottish nations. Yet the result of the national movement was to separate one people from another, and with the fourteenth century a sharp line of demarcation began to be drawn between England and her neighbours. The English and French states, very similar in the days of Edward I. and Philip the Fair, became quite different under Edward III. and the early Valois kings. The common English of the days of the Hundred Years' War hated the French with a hatred more deadly than was found among the cosmopolitan knightly class that took the lead in the fighting against the

Chivalry
and the
Orders of
Knighthood

Archers.

The cos-
mopolitan
and the
national
ideals.

national enemy. In such circumstances, though the bilingual habit long clung to the upper classes in England, the result of the process was in the long run the restoration of English to its position before the Conquest as the everyday language of all classes of Englishmen from king to peasant. From this flowed the marvellous development of English literature, which was one of the great features of the age of Edward III.

19. The thirteenth century was not a very literary age. Though many books were written by Englishmen in Latin, French, and English, few of them had any serious pretensions to high literary rank. The grave Latin treatises produced by the scholars of the Universities were almost entirely destitute of any literary charm. It was a great age for science and philosophy, and men of learning cared nothing for the form of the matter that they produced in their books. The finest Latin literature was that of the chroniclers, and especially of the series of illustrious historians who made the Benedictine abbey of St. Albans the most continuous centre of historical composition in Britain. Of these, the best is Matthew Paris, who wrote the history of England up to 1258. He is, perhaps, the greatest historian of the Middle Ages, having a vivid though prolix style, a bold and independent judgment, an insatiable curiosity, and a sturdy English patriotism that makes him the forerunner of the national movements of the days of three Edwards. As the schoolmen became more powerful, even historical literature began to decline, and the chroniclers of the reign of Edward I. are but sorry successors to those of the days of Henry II. and Henry III. Things became better under Edward III., but for the most artistic presentations of that famous reign, we must go to those who wrote in French rather than in Latin.

20. Never was French more used or better written in England than in the days of Henry III., in which reign French words first began to be used freely in the English language, which since the Norman conquest had stubbornly refused them admission. Moreover, public proclamations and official letters, hitherto mainly issued in Latin, are often published in French, which by the time of the Hundred Years' War began to rival Latin as the international tongue of the statesmen, diplomats, and lawyers. It also remained the most usual language in which men composed the light literature of song, romance, and chronicle, which was written to amuse the upper classes. The most vivid description of Edward III.'s reign was written in French by

the Hainault clerk, John Froissart, who spent many years at the court of his patroness and compatriot, Queen Philippa. Froissart had no care for accuracy, and was blind to the deeper movements of the time; but in wealth of detail, in literary charm and colour, and in genial appreciation of the externals of his age, he was unsurpassed. Nowhere else can be read so vivid a picture of the courts, battles, tournaments, and feasts of the knights and barons of the Hundred Years' War.

21. English literature was mainly represented during the thirteenth century by a great mass of translations and adaptations, which showed that there was a public ready to read vernacular books, but not at home in the French language. Few continuous works of high merit were as yet written in the native tongue, but much evidence of deep feeling and careful art lay hidden away in

English
literature
in the
thirteenth
century.

half-forgotten and anonymous lyrics, satires, and romances. The language in which these works were written was steadily becoming more like our modern English. The dialectical differences became less acute; the inflections began to drop away; the vocabulary gradually absorbed a large *romance* (French and Latin) element, and the prosody abandoned the forms of the West Saxon period for measures that show a close connection with the contemporary poetry of France. With the age of Edward III., the time of triumphant English nationality, a really great literature in English was written. While the Frenchman Froissart was the chief

English
literature
in the
fourteenth
century.

literary figure of Edward III.'s court in the middle period of his reign, his place during the last few years of it was occupied by Geoffrey Chaucer, the first real poet of the English literary revival. The son of a substantial London vintner, Chaucer held minor offices at court, took part in the several campaigns of the Hundred Years' War, and served in diplomatic missions to Italy, Flanders, and elsewhere. His early poems reflected the modes and metres of the current French tradition in an English dress. His Italian mission may have first introduced him to the famous Italian poets—Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio—whose works he admired and copied. In his *Canterbury Tales*, he produced the most consummate work which any Englishman ever wrote before the Elizabethan age. Though he was a court poet, writing to amuse lords and ladies, he depicted every phase of English life with unrivalled insight, knowledge of character, delicacy of humour, and profound literary art.

Geoffrey
Chaucer,
? 1340-1400.

22. Chaucer wrote in the tongue of the southern Midlands, the region wherein were situated his native London, the two Universities, the habitual residences of the court, the chief seats of the be- parliaments and councils, and the most frequented ginnings resorts of commerce. The later *Middle English* which of standard English. he used prepared the way for the *Modern English* of the sixteenth century. For the first time, a standard English language, the *King's English*, came into being, which largely displaced for literary purposes the local dialects which had hitherto been the natural vehicles for writing. The dialect of the south, the descendant of the tongue of the West Saxon court, became the language of peasants and artisans. That a greater future remained to the idiom of the north country was due to its becoming the speech of a free Scotland, the language in which John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, commemorated for the court of David II. and Robert II. the exploits of Robert Bruce and the heroes of the Scottish war of independence. The unity of England thus found another notable expression in the oneness of the popular speech, while the development of the northern dialect into the *Lowland Scottish* of a separate kingdom showed that, if England were united, English-speaking Britain remained divided against itself.

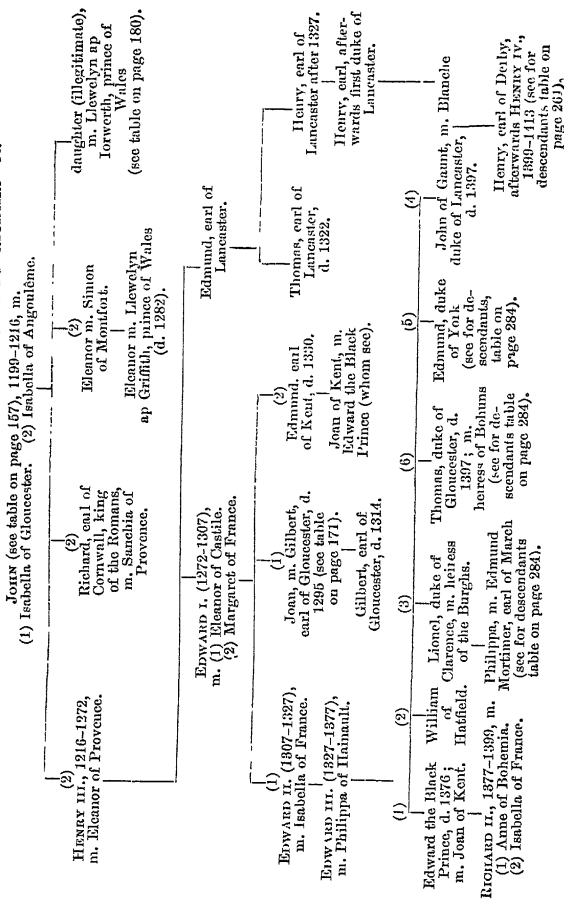
23. Froissart and Chaucer show us the bright sides of the England of Edward III. The social and economic troubles of the William years of strain and stress that succeeded the Black Death are shown in the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, the Langland, 1330-1400. work of William Langland, a man from the March of Wales, who spent his life mainly in London, and wrote in the language of the city of his adoption. His vigorous and purposeful verses set closely before us the miseries of the poor, the corruptions of the Church, the greediness of the lords and ladies, the unrest and discontent of the labouring classes, and the bitter indignation of the masses against the old social order which found its fullest expression in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Though written in archaic diction and in the ancient *alliterative* metre, Langland, even more than Chaucer, reflected the modernity of his age. A John Wy- still more modern note was sounded by John Wycliffe, cliff, 1384, the first Englishman to lead a revolt against the and the teachings of the mediæval Church. Wycliffe's early beginning of modern writings were in Latin, and are altogether technical English and scholastic in their character. When, after the prose. outbreak of the papal schism, he became an avowed heretic, he saw that it was not enough to have doctors and thinkers

on his side, but that he must make an appeal to the people of England. Accordingly he began to employ the English tongue, and, Yorkshireman though he was, he wrote in the southern language of London and Oxford rather than in the dialect of his native north. In pithy vigorous tracts and sermons, he strove to take the English people into partnership with him in his war against the old Church. Above all, he inspired his followers to undertake a translation of the Bible into English, and probably carried out a part of the work with his own hands. Wycliffe's *English Bible*, extensively circulated by his poor priests and other Lollard teachers, became widely read and eagerly studied. It stands to English prose as Chaucer's poetry stands to English verse. With these works the future of the English tongue was finally fixed, and in them the national movement of the fourteenth century found its fullest and completest expression.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR THE FURTHER STUDY OF THE PERIOD
1216-1399.

The first four reigns of this period are covered by Tout's *History of England, 1216-1377* (Longmans' "Political History of England," vol. iii.), and that of Richard II.'s, by Oman's *History of England, 1377-1485* ("Political History of England," vol. iv.). Stubbs' *Constitutional History*, vol. ii., exactly includes this portion of our history. Ecclesiastical History may be studied in the later part of W. R. W. Stephens' *History* already referred to, and its continuation W. W. Capes' *History of the English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. For particular points the following may be consulted: G. W. Prothero's, or Charles Bémont's *Simon de Montfort* (the latter in French); Little's *Mediæval Wales*; O. M. Edwards' *Wales* ("Story of the Nations"); Tout's *Edward I.* (Macmillan's "Twelve English Statesmen"); Warburton's *Age of Edward III.* (Longmans' "Epochs of Modern History"); R. L. Poole's *Wycliffe* (Longmans' "Epochs of Church History"); and G. M. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wycliffe*. The latter part of Miss Bateson's *Mediæval England* ("Story of the Nations") illustrates the social history, for which also Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, and G. C. Macaulay's abridgment of Froissart's *Chronicle* in English (Macmillan's "Globe Series"), may most profitably be consulted. Jusserand's *English Wayfaring Life in the Fourteenth Century* (translated by Lucy T. Smith), and the same writer's *Piers Plowman*, throw light on important aspects of the time. Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce: Middle Ages*, shows the industrial development of the period. G. G. Coulton's *Chaucer and his England* gives a lively picture of late fourteenth century English society. Hilda Johnstone's *Hundred Years of History, 1216-1327*, gives a useful and coherent selection of translations from original authorities. Maps xviii. (Edward I.), xix. (Anglia Sacra), xxv. (Scotland c. 1300), and xxix. (Early Ireland), in *Oxford Historical Atlas*.

GENEALOGY OF THE ENGLISH KINGS FROM JOHN TO RICHARD II.



BOOK IV

LANCASTER AND YORK (1399-1485,

CHAPTER I

HENRY IV. (1399-1413)

Chief Dates:

- 1399. Accession of Henry iv.
- 1400. Revolt of Owen Glendower.
- 1401. Statute *de heretico comburendo*.
- 1403. Battle of Shrewsbury.
- 1408. Battle of Bramham Moor.
- 1413. Death of Henry iv.

1. THE Lancastrian revolution of 1399 marks the end of the period which had opened with the granting of Magna Carta and the beginnings of the parliamentary system. That time had seen the growth of our system of limited monarchy and parliamentary control, and strong kings like Edward III. had sought to evade rather than deny their constitutional restrictions. Alone of the fourteenth-century kings, Richard II. had striven to break down the constitution and make himself a despot. On his utter failure, the throne passed to the man whose previous career and ancestry alike compelled him to accept the constitution and rule England as a limited monarch. With Henry iv.'s succession, the constitutional opposition, whose claims had so often been upheld by the House of Lancaster, mounted the throne. No one could be deceived either by Henry's pretence to inherit the throne from Henry III. or by his claim to possess it by right of conquest. The son of John of Gaunt was not even the nearest heir to Richard by blood, and the deposed king had acknowledged the earl of March, the grandson of Lionel of Clarence, as presumptive successor to the crown. But the growth of the parliamentary system had made the hereditary element less

The Constitutional
Revolution
of 1399.

important than ever. Henry owed his throne to the choice of parliament, which saluted in him the avenger of the Lords Appellant, and expected him to rule after a constitutional fashion. The first result of the revolution, then, was to secure the triumph of the constitutional cause. Henry IV.'s parliaments forced him to redress their grievances before they would grant him supplies, and under him the House of Commons secured for all time the exclusive right of initiating taxation. On more than one occasion the Commons forced him to nominate his council in parliament. If this custom had become permanent, his reign would have anticipated the modern system of *cabinet government*, by which the ministers, formally chosen by the king, are really subject to the approval of parliament. Moreover, not only Henry IV., but his son and grandson also ruled after this constitutional fashion. Under the Lancastrian kings the parliament attained the greatest power that it ever secured before quite modern times.

2. Richard II. had been careless of the Church as well as neglectful of the constitution. Under him Lollardy grew, though he was no Lollard; and he was bitterly opposed to the orthodox constitutional prelates, whose influence had so long been thrown into the side of the opposition. With Henry of Lancaster archbishop of Arundel came back to England, and was restored to the throne of Canterbury. He was the strongest of the conservative prelates of his time, and soon made his influence felt against heretics and enemies of the Church. Moreover, Henry IV., a crusader in his youth, was the most devout and orthodox of kings. The result was that the Lancastrian revolution was as much an orthodox reaction from the lax and anti-clerical spirit that had prevailed at Richard's court, as it was a constitutional reaction from the late king's despotic ways. The change which secured the rights of parliament brought about the decline and fall of Lollardy. In 1401 Archbishop Arundel carried through parliament a statute for the burning of heretics (*de heretico comburendo*), by which persons condemned in the Church courts for false teaching were handed over to the sheriff of the county to be burnt alive. The first victim of the new policy was a Lollard priest named Sawtre. Before the king died, Lollardy had produced many martyrs; and Wycliffe's teaching was not firmly enough rooted to endure the fires of persecution.

3. It was easier for Henry IV. to win the throne than to keep it. All through his reign he was beset by troubles on every side. The encroachments of his parliaments and the resistance of the

Lollards were not the worst of his difficulties. He had to face a constant series of conspiracies and revolts at home, the persistent hostility of the chief foreign powers, and the unending jealousies of rival court factions. Though he had stooped to acts of treachery and violence, he was on the whole a high-minded and well-meaning man, and the death of Richard sat heavily upon his conscience. Though in the end he overcame his worst troubles, he wore himself out in the struggle.

Henry IV.'s
character
and
difficulties.

4. After the accession of the new king, parliament reversed the acts of the Parliament of 1397, and Richard's friends were deprived of their new titles and estates. In disgust at this, the partisans of the late king formed a plot against his successor. Their plan was to meet at Windsor on Twelfth Night, 1400, on pretence of holding a tournament. Then they were to seize the king and put him to death, and restore Richard to the throne. The design was betrayed, and the chief conspirators fled to Cirencester, where the townsfolk forced them to surrender. The only important result of the conspiracy was that it taught Henry the danger of allowing Richard to remain alive. A short time after its failure it was announced that Richard was dead at Pontefract.

Death of
Richard II.

5. Serious trouble soon broke out in Wales, where Richard's party was still strong, and where the tradition of national independence still lingered. Difficulties began in a dispute between the Marcher baron, Lord Grey of Ruthin, and a neighbouring Welsh landlord, Owen ap Griffith, lord of Glyndyrvdwy, on the upper Dee, commonly called Owen of Glendower. Grey had taken possession of certain lands which Owen claimed, and Owen, being refused all redress by the English law courts, recovered the districts by force of arms. His private war against Grey soon grew into a formidable rebellion. Before long Owen assumed the title of Prince of Wales, and set vigorously to work to restore the independence of his country. Every part of Wales rallied round him. Many of the castles of the king and his Marcher lords fell into his hands, and two expeditions led by Henry in person against him proved utter failures. At last, in 1402, he occupied Ruthin, and took Grey, his enemy, prisoner into Snowdon. A few months later he defeated Sir Edmund Mortimer, a grandson of Lionel of Clarence, and uncle of Edmund, earl of March, at *Pilleth*, near Radnor, and also took him prisoner. A third royal expedition to Wales was as unsuccessful as the two

Owen
Glendower.

previous ones. On Henry's retirement, Mortimer made peace with Owen, and married his daughter. It was now given out that the object of the allies was to restore King Richard if he were alive, and, if not, to procure the accession of the earl of March, under whom Owen was to reign as prince of Wales. This union of the Welsh and the Mortimers threatened alike the English power in Wales and Henry's position in England.

6. Henry IV. was the less able to grapple with the Welsh revolt since foreign powers regarded him with great hostility. The French long refused to recognize him as king, and the Percies, there were fierce disputes about the return of Queen 1403.

Isabella, Richard's widow, to France. The Scots were equally hostile, and in 1402 invaded England, but were defeated by Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, at *Humbleton*, where many Scottish lords were taken prisoners. Northumberland and the Percies had materially helped to gain Henry his throne, but they were discontented that the king allowed them less power than they had hoped, and threw a large share of the trouble and expense of fighting the Scotch and Welsh on to their hands. Northumberland's son, Henry Percy, called Hotspur, by reason of his rash valour, was the brother-in-law of Edmund Mortimer, and was induced by him to make common cause with the Welsh. At last, in 1403, the Percies made peace with the Scots, rose suddenly against the king, and marched from the north to join the Welsh and the Mortimers. Henry resolved to crush the rebellion before the Welsh and Percies united their forces, and was helped in this by Glendower rashly choosing this moment to extend his power into South Wales. When Hotspur approached Shrewsbury on his way to join Owen, he found that the Welsh were far away, and that the border city was occupied by the king with a strong force. On July 21, the *battle of Shrewsbury* was fought at Berwick, three miles to the north of the town, on a site since marked by the church of Battlefield, erected by Henry in commemoration of the victory which he won. Hotspur was slain, his uncle, the earl of Worcester, and his ally, the Scotch earl of Douglas, were taken prisoners. A few weeks later Northumberland, who had remained in his Yorkshire estates, made his submission. For the moment the English rebellion seemed suppressed.

7. Owen Glendower still remained in arms. A fourth expedition of Henry proved as unsuccessful as the rest. Owen now made an alliance with the French, and a French fleet came to Carmarthen Bay to help him. He summoned a Welsh parliament, and

transferred his obedience from the Roman pope acknowledged in England, to the Avignon pope recognized by the French. In 1405 his cause was helped by a second revolt of Northumberland. Thereupon Owen, Mortimer, and Northumberland made a treaty by which they divided England into three parts, of which each confederate took one as his share. Meanwhile Henry's troops put down Northumberland's rising at *Shipton Moor*, in Yorkshire. Northumberland escaped, but Archbishop Scrope of York, who had joined him, was taken prisoner and executed, with complete disregard to the immunity of the Church from secular jurisdiction. Northumberland fled to Scotland, but in 1408 he once more appeared in the north, and again rallied a force round him. He was again defeated, at *Bramham Moor*, in Yorkshire, and perished in the conflict. After his death Henry had no more trouble with his English enemies. Even Owen Glendower gradually began to lose ground. The king's son, Henry, prince of Wales, bit by bit conquered all southern and central Wales. However, Owen held out manfully in the north, and was still in arms at Henry iv.'s death. He was no longer a prince, but a fugitive in the mountains. In the days of his prosperity he had shown wonderful courage and skill both in fighting the English and in building up his new principality. He now showed even more rare gifts in bravely coping with adversity. It was no wonder that he became the great hero of his countrymen. Wales was, however, once more in English hands, and stern laws kept its people in subjection.

8. As Henry's domestic difficulties decreased, he gradually became able to take up a firmer position abroad. In 1406 a piece of good luck saved him from further difficulties with the Scots. In that year James, the son of Robert III., king of Scots, was captured by English sailors off Flamborough Head, as he was on his way to be educated at the French court. Within a few months his father's death made Henry's captive king James I. He remained for nineteen years a prisoner in England, where his presence was a guarantee that the Scots could not inflict much harm on England. Henry was equally lucky in his dealings with France. when king Charles VI., Richard II.'s father-in-law, went mad and was quite unable to restrain the fierce faction fights that now broke out between the two parties of the *Burgundians* and the *Armagnacs*. The former faction was headed by the king's cousin, John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy and count of Flanders, who

Henry IV.
and France.

was not only the mightiest noble in France but also aspired to the position of an independent prince. The rival party of the Armagnacs was led by the count of Armagnac, one of the greatest of the feudal lords of the south. The disputes between them soon reduced France to such a low condition that Henry had nothing more to fear from her hostility. Towards the end of his reign he was able to revenge himself for the French help given to Glendower by sending expeditions to France. These forces at one time helped the Armagnacs, at another the Burgundians, and thus increased the confusion in that country.

9. Thus, after long struggles, Henry iv. established himself securely in his throne. But he wore himself out in the conflict, and after 1406 was a broken-down invalid. His unfitness to govern gave opportunity for court factions to revive and struggle for power. Archbishop Arundel, who had long been Henry's chief minister, represented the traditions of the Lords Appellant and the old constitutional party. He found bitter enemies in the Beauforts, the half-brothers of the king. The Beauforts were the sons of John of Gaunt by Catharine Swyntord, who became the duke's third wife after their birth. This marriage gave an excuse for Richard II. legitimatizing Catharine's children, but Henry iv., when he confirmed this act, provided that they should not be regarded as competent to succeed to the throne. The eldest of the brothers, John, became earl of Somerset, while Henry became bishop of Winchester, and Thomas, the third, succeeded Arundel as chancellor in 1410. The Beauforts upheld the tradition of the courtiers with whom John of Gaunt had himself so long been associated. They had a powerful ally in Henry, prince of Wales, a high-spirited and able young man, who, when very young, had won much credit by the share he took in putting down the Welsh rising, but had caused some scandal by his wild and injudicious pursuit of amusement during his scanty leisure. The prince was ambitious, and showed an eager desire to profit by his father's illness to get power into his own hands. Against him and the Beauforts Arundel strove to uphold the personal authority of the sick king. The archbishop's dismissal and his replacement by Sir Thomas Beaufort was the work of the prince. It was believed that the prince wished to procure his father's abdication, and the king was bitterly wounded by his son's conduct. Recovering his health somewhat, Henry restored Arundel to the chancellorship. Soon afterwards he grew worse again, and died in 1413, when only forty-six years of age.

The Beau-
forts and
the prince
of Wales.

Death of
Henry IV.,
1413.

CHAPTER II

HENRY V. (1413-1422)

Chief Dates :

- 1413. Accession of Henry v
- 1414. Oldcastle's Rising.
- 1415. Battle of Agincourt.
- 1417. End of the Papal Schism.
- 1419. Conquest of Rouen.
- 1420. Treaty of Troyes.
- 1422. Death of Henry v.

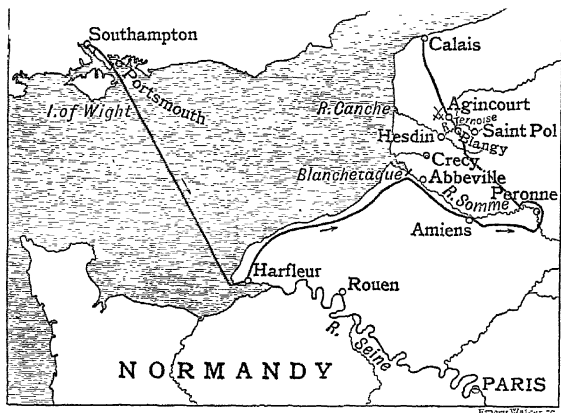
1. HENRY V. was crowned king on Palm Sunday, 1413. "As soon as he was crowned," wrote a chronicler, "suddenly he was changed into a new man, and all his intention was to live virtuously." He had not shown much good feeling in his relations to his father, but he was now eager to set his past aside, and to rule wisely as the chosen king of the whole nation. He strove to bury the old feuds by releasing his rival, the earl of March, from prison, and by erecting a sumptuous monument over the remains of Richard II. in Westminster Abbey. In his anxiety to put a complete end to the Welsh revolt, he offered to pardon all the Welsh in arms against him, including Owen Glendower himself. This prudent policy proved completely successful. Owen scorned to accept pardon from his supplanter, and remained unconquered among the mountains. His followers, however, made their submission, and, on the chieftain's death soon afterwards, the Welsh troubles were completely ended.

2. The only thing which Henry did that showed any spirit of revenge was his removal of Archbishop Arundel from the chancery. Henry Beaufort became chancellor in the archbishop's place, and remained the new king's chief adviser. Henry, however, continued to work cordially with Arundel, especially when the archbishop attacked the Lollards. The most powerful supporter of the Lollards was Sir John Oldcastle, a knight from the Welsh March, who had become Lord Cobham by his marriage with a Kentish heiress. He was an old friend of the king, and had fought under him in several campaigns, but Henry's fierce orthodoxy made him

regardless of personal ties when he had to deal with heretics. Oldcastle was arrested, and convicted of heresy before Archbishop Arundel. Soon after his condemnation Oldcastle escaped from the Tower, and neither king nor archbishop could find out his hiding-place. The Lollards had long suffered severely from persecution, and in the fall of their leader their last hopes seemed to have vanished. In their despair they formed a plot to capture the king at Eltham, while a Lollard mob mustered in St. Giles' Fields, to the west of London, and sought to divert attention from the attack on Henry by an assault on the city. Henry's promptitude easily frustrated the conspiracy. He left Eltham for London, and shut himself with an armed force within the capital. Next morning, January 12, 1414, he surrounded the Lollard gathering at St. Giles' Fields, and easily frustrated their designs. Oldcastle fled to the March of Wales, where he lay hiding till 1417, when he was captured, taken to London, and hung as a traitor. With his execution Lollardy almost disappeared from history. Though the Lollard leaders had shown great constancy in persecution, they were too few in numbers and held too extreme views to have much influence over the nation at large. Within a generation the Lollards were almost extinct. Thus the orthodoxy of the Lancastrian kings secured a complete triumph.

3. Henry v. was above all things a soldier, and his chief anxiety was to revive the foreign policy of Edward III. He had good reason to resent the hostility of France to the House of Lancaster, and the deplorable state of anarchy into which France had now fallen offered him a temptation, which he made no effort to resist, to profit by French misfortunes. His first parliament agreed with him that he should renew Edward III.'s claim to the French throne, though, even if Edward III.'s title to France had been a just one, the heir of it was not the king, but the earl of March. Parliament made Henry a liberal grant of money to enable him to enforce his claim. Besides this, it passed an act whereby the *alien priories*—that is, the small monasteries of foreign monks established on the English estates of French houses of religion—should be suppressed, lest the foreign inmates should send English money out of the country to be employed in making war against England. This law is worth remembering, because it marks the first occasion on which parliament ventured to suppress religious houses and lay hands upon the property of the Church. Orthodox as were Henry and his parliament, they had no great love of extreme ecclesiastical pretensions.

4. In the summer of 1415, Henry went down to Southampton to embark with his army to France. His departure was delayed by the news that his cousin Richard, earl of Cambridge, the son of Edmund, duke of York, had joined a plot to deprive the king of his throne, in favour of Edmund, earl of March, whose sister, Anne, he had married. Earl Edmund, however, repaid Henry's generosity by refusing to join the conspirators, and repeating all that he knew to the king. Cambridge was arrested, and condemned to immediate execution, and March himself sat among his brother-in-law's



THE AGINCOURT CAMPAIGN.

judges. Immediately afterwards the king and his troops crossed over to France, landing at the mouth of the Seine.

5. In France, Henry's first step was to besiege Harfleur, a town which was then the chief port on the north bank of the estuary.

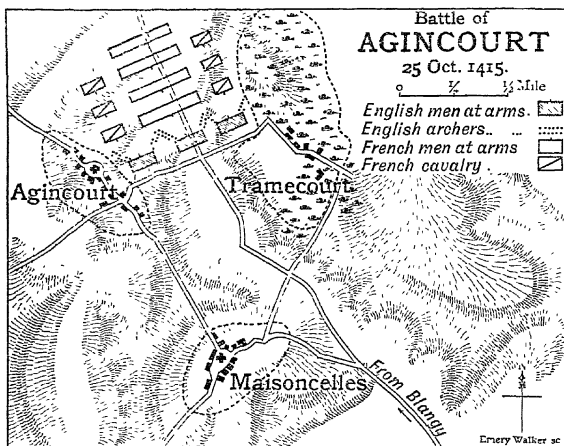
Harfleur made a heroic resistance, and the English suffered greatly from sickness during the long siege. *The siege of Harfleur.*

When, late in September, the place at last surrendered, Henry's army was so much weakened that all he could do was to march northwards to Calais, by as direct a road as lay open to him. He proceeded along the Norman coast as far as the Lower Somme, where he reached the ford of Blanchetague, which Edward III. had crossed in 1346. There, however, he found that the French held

the bank with such force that it was dangerous to attempt the passage. Accordingly, he marched past Abbeville and Amiens, up the left bank of the Somme, which he at last succeeded in crossing a little higher up than Péronne. Here he again resumed his northward progress, which was uninterrupted until he had safely crossed the Ternoise at Blangy, between Saint-Pol and Hesdin. Once over the river, he climbed up through narrow and deep-sunk lanes to the plateau which lies north of the stream, and took up his quarters at the village of Maisoncelles. There he perceived that his further movements were blocked by a great French army, which held the flat upland immediately to his north, between the villages of Tramecourt and *Agincourt*, now called *Azincourt*, whose hedges and enclosures formed natural limits to the battle ground to the east and west.

6. The war-worn English army had now the alternative of retreating, or of cutting its way through the superior forces of the enemy. Henry at once resolved to engage in battle, and his soldier's eye saw at once that the narrow plateau on which the French had elected to fight did not give them room enough to employ their superior numbers to advantage. By the morning of October 25, his troops were ready to fight a defensive battle after the accustomed fashion. Archers and men-at-arms were alike dismounted, and the former, placed on the wings of each of the three divisions of the army, provided themselves with stakes to form a palisade to protect them from the French charge. For some time they waited, hoping that the enemy would attack, but instead of this the French withdrew somewhat to the north. Thereupon Henry ordered the English to advance, and take up a new position between Agincourt and Tramecourt, within bowshot of the foe. This act of daring stirred up the French to make their long-deferred attack. The bulk of their army was also dismounted, but cavalry forces occupied each wing, and these, galled by the English arrows, advanced, in the hope of riding down the English archers. Protected by their palisades, the English bowmen made light of the assault, and soon the French horsemen were retreating in confusion. By this time the French men-at-arms had drawn near to the English centre. The soft ground was muddy from recent rain, and the heavily armoured French, assailed by the archers on their flanks, found their action much impeded. Seeing that the enemy's forward movement was checked, the archers, flushed with victory, abandoned the palisades, and fell on the French with sword, axe, and mallet in flank and rear. Before long the whole

French army was thrown into hopeless confusion, and the English, with slight loss, won an overwhelming victory. Next day, the conquerors renewed their march for Calais, and, within a few weeks, Henry marched in triumph through London.



The dotted lines mark the hedges enclosing the villages.

7. Agincourt won for Henry as great a position in Europe as ever Edward III. had enjoyed. One good result that flowed from this was, that Henry was able to use his influence to put an end to the deplorable schism in the papacy, which, since 1378, had scandalized all Europe. The Emperor Sigismund was very anxious to restore unity to the Church, but the first efforts to promote it had had the unfortunate result that a third pope was elected while the other two popes still remained in office. Sigismund visited England, where Henry gave him a royal welcome. Partly through their efforts, a *General Council* of the Church met at Constance, and the end of the Schism in the Papacy. At first, it seemed likely that the enmity of France and England would make peace hopeless among the assembled councillors; but at last the union of the English and Germans resulted in the deposition of all three popes, and the appointment of Martin V., a new pope whom all Europe recognized. The council also tried to

remedy the abuses of the Church. In this it was not very successful; but it burnt John Huss, a professor of the university of Prague, in Bohemia, who had studied Wycliffe's writings, and had striven to establish in his own land the views that the Lollards had upheld in England. Thus the teaching of Wycliffe was condemned on the Continent as well as in England. The Hussites, though they made a brave fight, were put down like the Lollards, and the orthodox party triumphed everywhere.

8. The battle of Agincourt had not resulted in the capture of a single castle, and from 1415 to 1417 all the lands held by the English in northern France were Calais and Harfleur. Harfleur itself, which Henry wished to make a second Calais, was in some danger. However, in 1417, Henry led a second expedition into France, with which he set

The conquest of Normandy, 1417-19.

to work to effect the conquest of Normandy. He met with fierce resistance at every step, but persevered with such energy, that, by 1419, nearly the whole of the duchy was in his hands. The last place of importance that resisted him was Rouen, which surrendered early in 1419, after a long and famous siege, which tried the skill and endurance of Henry's soldiers far more than the fight at Agincourt.

9. Burgundians and Armagnacs continued their feuds even when the enemy was conquering their native country, and it was not until all Normandy was in English hands that the two factions made an effort to unite against the invader. At last, however, it was arranged that

The treaty of Troyes, 1420.

Charles, dauphin of Vienne, the mad king's eldest son, who now led the Armagnacs, should hold a conference with Duke John of Burgundy, at Montereau on the Yonne. The meeting took place on the bridge, and was signalized by the treacherous murder of the duke by the Armagnacs. A great wave of feeling now turned all northern France from the bloodthirsty Armagnacs. Philip the Good, Duke John's son and successor, at once made a treaty of alliance with the English. Paris, where Burgundian feeling was very strong, gladly followed his lead, and in 1420 the *treaty of Troyes* was signed between Henry and his French allies, by which the foreign invader assumed the new character of the partisan of the Burgundian faction. By it, Henry was to marry Catharine, the daughter of the mad King Charles VI., and to govern France, as regent, for the rest of his father-in-law's life. On Charles's death, Henry and his heirs were to succeed to the French throne, it being only stipulated that France should still be ruled by French laws and by French councillors. So bitter was

the feeling against the dauphin, that a large number of Frenchmen, and most Parisians, gladly welcomed the victor of Agincourt as their ruler. English arms had won Henry only one glorious victory and one province. The Burgundian alliance now opened up the prospect of his ruling over all France.

10. The treaty of Troyes was largely accepted in the north. However, south of the Loire, where Armagnac feeling predominated, Charles the Dauphin was still recognized, and Henry's pretensions were rejected. While Henry returned to England with his new queen, his brother Thomas, duke of Clarence, strove to extend the sphere of Anglo-Burgundian influence in Central France. In 1421 Clarence was defeated and slain, at *Baugé*, by a force of French and Scots.

11. It was clear that much fighting would take place before the treaty of Troyes could be carried out. Henry at once led a third expedition into France, taking with him the captive king of Scots in the hope that the Scots would hesitate to fight against their own sovereign. Henry was welcomed by the Parisians as their future king, and had made some progress with his difficult task, when he was carried off by disease, at Vincennes, in August, 1422, when only thirty-five years of age, and before disaster had checked his wonderful career of conquest. He was one of the greatest of our kings, an admirable soldier, an able general, a wise and conciliatory statesman, and a highminded, honourable gentleman. He was strict, austere, grave, and cold. His intentions were good, but he wanted insight, sympathy, and imagination. He found it easy to persuade himself that whatever he wished to do was right. Thus he was profoundly convinced that his pursuit of power and glory flowed altogether from his conviction of the lawfulness of his claims to the French crown. He was, however, wonderfully efficient in carrying out anything that he undertook. Though he could be cruel to those who stood across his path, he was, for the most part, a lover of justice, a kind master, merciful to defeated foes, and careful of the comfort and well-being of his soldiers and subjects. His piety was sincere, but showed an unlovely side in his harshness to the Lollards. He was the only strong and popular king of the house of Lancaster, and Englishmen trusted him so entirely that he could afford to play the part of a constitutional ruler, since his parliaments always gave him all that he asked for. His glory, undimmed during his life, shone with even brighter lustre through the disasters of the next reign.

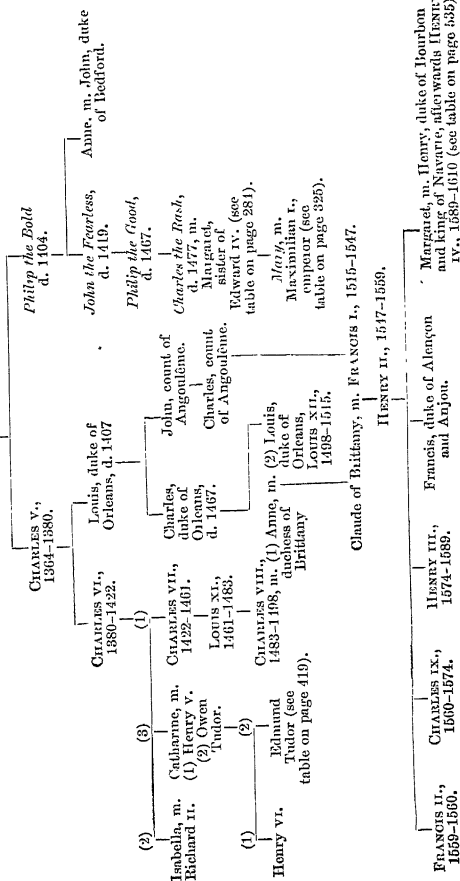
The battle
of Baugé,
1421.

Third ex-
pedition,
and death of
Henry V.,
1422.

THE VALOIS KINGS OF FRANCE AND THE VALOIS DUKES OF BURGUNDY
(Kings of France in small capitals ; dukes of Burgundy in italics.)

PHILIP VI., 1328-1350.
(see table on page 207)

JOHN, 1350-1364.



CHAPTER III

HENRY VI. (1422-1461)

Chief Dates:

- 1422. Accession of Henry VI.
- 1429. Relief of Orleans.
- 1431. Death of Joan of Arc.
- 1435. Congress of Arras.
- 1444. Truce of Tours.
- 1447. Deaths of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort.
- 1450. Revolt of Cade.
- 1453. Battle of Castillon.
- 1455. Battle of St. Albans.
- 1460. York claims the throne; battle of Wakefield.
- 1461. Deposition of Henry VI.

1. ON Henry V.'s death, his only son, a baby nine months old, succeeded him as Henry VI. A few weeks later the little king's grandfather, Charles VI., died also. Henry was thereupon proclaimed king of France as well as England. It was hard enough, under any circumstances, to carry out the conditions of the treaty of Troyes, and this policy had now to be executed under the special difficulties of a long minority in both realms. The English parliament made Henry's elder uncle, John, duke of Bedford, *protector* of England, and the king's chief councillor; but as John also became regent of France, it was provided that, in his absence, his younger brother, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, should hold his English office. In reality, the royal power was put into the hands of the council, of which Gloucester was little more than the president.

2. Bedford was a true brother of Henry V., and showed rare skill, devotion, and magnanimity in carrying out the hopeless task which lay before him. He was wise enough to see that the only chance of making his nephew king of France lay in close alliance with Philip the Good and the Burgundian party. He showed such loyalty to his allies that, in Paris and all other districts of northern

Bedford's
work in
France,
1422-1428.

France where the Burgundians were influential, his nephew was accepted as king without difficulty. He further strengthened his position by an alliance with the duke of Brittany, who, after Burgundy, was the most powerful of the great French feudatories. All his exertions could not, however, prevent the proclamation of the dauphin as Charles VII. in central and southern France; and, south of the Loire, the only district that acknowledged Henry as king was the scanty remnant of the English duchy of Aquitaine. Charles VII. was, however, hated for his share in the tragedy at Montereau; and his self-indulgent, lazy, and unenterprising character made him ill-fitted to play the part of a patriot king. His enemies called him, in derision, the "king of Bourges," and he seldom went far from the region of the middle Loire, where his best friends were to be found. Bedford and Burgundy now sought to extend their power. In 1423 they defeated the Armagnacs at *Cravant*, near Auxerre, in Burgundy, and in 1424 won another brilliant victory at *Verneuil*, in upper Normandy. As the Scots continued to give much help to the French, Bedford released the captive James I., married him to Jane Beaufort, the daughter of the earl of Somerset, and sent him back to Scotland as the ally of the English. Bedford's prudent policy was, however, sorely hampered by the folly of his brother Gloucester, who made himself the rival of Burgundy by marrying Jacqueline of Bavaria, a claimant to the county of Hainault, over which Duke Philip also had pretensions. The Anglo-Burgundian alliance seemed on the verge of dissolution, when Duke Humphrey invaded Hainault, and waged open war against Duke Philip. However, in 1426, Bedford managed to patch up peace between them, but it was long before the old cordiality between England and Burgundy was restored. The natural result of this was that the cause of King Henry made slow progress in France. Though Bedford and Burgundy could win battles, they were not strong enough to govern the country which they conquered. Northern France fell into a deplorable condition of weakness and confusion. Things were even worse in the regions which acknowledged Charles VII. The increasing weakness of the rival factions threatened all the land with the prospect of long years of anarchy.

3. In England, Duke Humphrey gave almost as much trouble to Bedford as in the Netherlands. He was a showy, vain-glorious, self-seeking man, who made constant efforts to win popularity. His only good point, however, was his love of letters and patronage of learned men. He was an incompetent politician, and under

his presidency the council was rent asunder by the disputes of rival factions. Gloucester posed as the leader of the popular party, while his uncle, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Gloucester as Protector of England, carried on the traditions of the court politicians with which the Beauforts had been identified 1422-1429. since the reign of Henry IV. Beaufort was a wiser statesman than his nephew, and had more influence in the council; while Gloucester was popular with the commons, who called him, with little reason, the *Good Duke Humphrey*. The disputes between the two rivals destroyed the effectiveness of the council, and weakened the government of the country. More than once Bedford was forced to abandon his work in France, and betake himself to England to reconcile his brother and his uncle. He never succeeded in establishing real cordiality between them. When the pope Beaufort a cardinal, Gloucester demanded that he should be excluded from the council, since, as cardinal, he was the natural counsellor of the pope, and had, therefore, no place among the advisers of an English king. So troublesome did Gloucester remain, that, in 1429, it was thought wise to crown the little king. Henry was only seven, but, after this ceremony, it was imagined that he was competent to rule on his own account. Gloucester ceased to be protector, and power fell more and more into the hands of Beaufort. His rival, however, was still strong enough to put grievous obstacles in the way of effective government.

4. The restoration of the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, and the diminution of Gloucester's influence in England, enabled Bedford to undertake fresh steps for the extension of his power in France. He now resolved to attempt the conquest of the left bank of the Loire, where Charles's power chiefly centred. As a preliminary to this he began, in 1428, to besiege Orleans. This town, which is situated on the right bank of the Loire, commanded one of the few bridges that then spanned the rapid river. It was the natural gate of the south, and its reduction would have been a deadly blow to the fortunes of the king of Bourges. Charles, however, was quite unable to give any help to the hard-pressed garrison, and it looked as if Orleans would soon be forced to surrender to the Anglo-Burgundian alliance.

5. At this moment of extreme depression in the fortunes of France, there occurred one of the most wonderful things in all history. One day there came to King Charles's court at Chinon a simple country girl, named Jeanne D'arc, or, as the English called her, Joan of Arc. She was a native of Domrémy, a

7. The first stage of Joan's work had now been accomplished; but she did not regard her mission as completed until she had driven the English out of France. She therefore still remained with the army, and made desperate efforts to win over the north to the patriotic cause. Victory, however, had made her over-confident. Her merit lay in her faith and inspiration. Now that, owing to her success, soldiers sought her advice on problems of generalship, she naturally made bad mistakes. She failed completely in an attack on Paris, and rashly threw herself into Compiègne, a place which, stirred up by her patriotic influence, had thrown off the Burgundian yoke and was now besieged by Duke Philip. On May 23, 1430, she fell into the hands of the enemy as she was returning from an unsuccessful sally on the defenders. After a long imprisonment, Joan was condemned, by a French ecclesiastical court, as a witch, and in 1431 was burned to death at Rouen. She had done such great deeds that English and French alike believed that there was something supernatural about her. But while French patriots were convinced that she was a maid sent from God, the English and Burgundians professed that she was inspired by the devil. She died so bravely that the more thoughtful of her English foes were convinced of her nobility of purpose. "We are undone," said they, "for this maid whom we have burned is a saint indeed."

8. The work of the maid of Orleans outlasted her martyrdom. The whole French people was now on the side of Charles, and even the Burgundians who had done Joan to death began to feel that their true position was that of traitors in league with the national enemy. In the face of ever-increasing difficulties, Bedford struggled nobly to uphold the English power. As if to answer the hallowing of Charles at Reims, he brought King Henry to France, and sought to have him also crowned at the accustomed crowning-place. But the patriotic party was now so strong in Champagne that access to Reims was impossible, and, after long delays, Bedford was forced to be content with his nephew's coronation in the cathedral of Paris. An English bishop, Henry of Winchester, performed the ceremony, and even the faithful Parisians grew discontented at the prominence given to the young king's English councillors.

9. The personal relations between Bedford and Burgundy now became strained. The death of Bedford's wife, who was Duke Philip's sister, broke the closest tie between them, and Bedford soon committed his one imprudence, that of marrying Jacquetta of

Luxemburg, a vassal of Philip, without the duke's knowledge or permission. From that moment the English power in France rapidly declined. The end came the quicker since the intrigues of Duke Humphrey once more forced Bedford to revisit England. When he went back to France he found that, outside Normandy and the neighbourhood of Paris, the English power was almost at an end. Duke Philip, now anxious to break with his English allies, summoned, in 1435, a general European Congress to meet at Arras, in the hope of making peace. There the English were offered the whole of Normandy and a large extension of their Gascon duchy if they would conclude peace and renounce their king's claim to France. With great unwisdom, Bedford refused these terms. He withdrew from the congress, and died soon after. Burgundy then made peace with Charles, and, in 1436, Paris opened its gates to the national king.

10. The war still lingered on for many years. Though success was hopeless, the English still struggled bravely, and the French were still so weak that their progress was comparatively slow. Henry VI. was now reaching man's estate. He was virtuous, intelligent, religious, and humble, but he was not strong enough, either in mind or body, to rule England effectively. The factious strife in his council went on as much as ever, and the parties of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort still contended for ascendancy. Beaufort was statesman enough to see that the wisest course for England was to conclude an honourable peace with France, which was still willing to make substantial concessions of territory in return for Henry's renunciation of his claim to the throne. Duke Humphrey bitterly opposed this pacific policy, and won a cheap popularity by denouncing all concessions, and clamouring for the continuance of the war. The young king was sincerely anxious for peace, and, as he grew up, his support gave Beaufort's party the ascendancy in the council. The indiscretion of Eleanor Cobham, Gloucester's wife, now brought about a further diminution of the duke's influence. The duchess of Gloucester, knowing that her husband was next in succession to the throne if Henry should die, consulted witches and astrologers as to the best way of hastening that event. By their advice she made an image of the king in wax, and melted it before a slow fire, believing that, as the wax melted away, so the king's life would waste away. In 1441 the duchess's childish form of treason was detected. Her accomplices were put to death, and

Eleanor herself was imprisoned for life in the Isle of Man. Not daring to intervene, Duke Humphrey "took all things patiently, and said little." Henceforth he had little influence, and chiefly busied himself with his favourite pursuit of literature.

11. In 1442 Henry came of age, and, guided by Beaufort's advice, pressed forward the policy of peace. William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, a soldier who had fought bravely against the French, and a strong supporter of Cardinal Beaufort, became the chief agent of the royal policy. In 1444 he negotiated a short truce at *Tours*, by which a marriage was arranged between Henry and Margaret of Anjou, the daughter of René, duke of Anjou, nominal king of Sicily and Jerusalem, and actual count of Provence and duke of Lorraine. The house of Anjou was a junior branch of the French royal house, and René's sister was the wife of Charles VII. In 1445, Margaret, a high-spirited girl of fifteen, was brought to England by Suffolk, and married to Henry.

The truce of
Tours, 1444,
and the
French
marriage,
1445.

12. The marriage was not popular; Margaret was poor, and did not even bring assured peace with France as her wedding portion. It was necessary to renew the truce from time to time, and the English were forced to purchase its continuance by the surrender of the few posts they held in Maine and Anjou, nominally to Margaret's father, really to the French. Suffolk was now made a duke, and became the chief adviser of the king and queen. In 1447 he procured the arrest of Gloucester, who had bitterly opposed the French marriage. Soon after his apprehension Duke Humphrey died. He had long been in wretched health, and his death was in all probability due to natural causes. His friends, however, persisted in believing that he was murdered, and accused Suffolk of the crime. In the same year his old enemy, Cardinal Beaufort, died also. He was the shrewdest statesman of the age, and his policy, though unpopular, was undoubtedly the right one. His death left the chief burden of responsibility on Suffolk. His nephew, Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, now represented the family tradition, and was Suffolk's most prominent ally.

Deaths of
Gloucester
and Beau-
fort, 1447.

13. The weak point of Suffolk's position was that, though he had staked everything upon the French alliance, he had made no lasting peace. Yet he was so sure that peace would continue, that he neglected the commonest precautions for securing such possessions as still remained in English hands. His ally Somerset, who was governor of Normandy, so grossly neglected his charge, that it was not unreasonable that doubts should be cast upon his

honour. Knowing that the English were in no position to resist, the French broke the truce in 1449, and invaded Normandy, which had been largely in English hands since its conquest by Henry V. thirty years before. Somerset made a poor resistance, and, by 1450, the whole of Normandy had passed over to the French. Next year Gascony was attacked, and the last remnants of the Aquitanian inheritance renounced English sway when Bordeaux and Bayonne opened their gates to the conqueror.

14. There was, however, a great difference between Gascony and Normandy. In Normandy the French came as deliverers, while in Gascony they came as conquerors. The men of the south had no complaint against the rule of their English dukes, and the government of Charles VII. proved so harsh and unpopular that, in 1451, they rose in revolt. John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, an aged hero who had fought in every war since the rebellion of Owen Glendower, was sent, in 1452, at the head of a considerable army from England, to assist the revolted Gascons. On his arrival nearly the whole of the district round Bordeaux returned to the English obedience. On July 17, 1453, Shrewsbury fought the last battle of the war at *Castillon* on the Dordogne. The French held a large entrenched and palisaded camp, defended by three hundred pieces of cannon. The Anglo-Gascon troops rashly charged these formidable earthworks, but were decimated by the enemy's fire before they reached the entrenchments. Shrewsbury himself was among the slain, and on that day the English duchy of Gascony finally perished. This was the last act of the Hundred Years' War. Henceforth Calais alone represented the English king's dominions in France.

15. The disasters in France created a strong feeling among the English against the incompetent statesmen who controlled her destinies. In the parliament of 1450, Suffolk was impeached, and a long series of charges brought against him. He was accused of corruption and maladministration, of betraying the kings' counsel to the French, and of conspiring to win the throne for his son. So loud was the outcry against him, that Henry VI. dared not protect his favourite minister. He declared the charges against him not proved, but strove to appease the Commons and keep the duke out of harm's way by banishing him from England for five years. As Suffolk was sailing towards Calais, his vessel was intercepted by a royal ship, called the *Nicholas of the Tower*, which was lying in wait for him. Carried

on board the *Nicholas* he was greeted with the cry of "Welcome, traitor!" and bidden to prepare for his end. Next day he was forced into a little boat, and an Irishman, "one of the lowest men in the ship," clumsily cut off his head with a rusty sword. The headless body was thrown upon the English coast, that all might see that not even the king's favour could save a man from the judgment of the commons of England.

16. The murder of Suffolk by the king's own seamen showed that the government was unable to preserve order. A few weeks later the incapacity of the administration was further proved by a formidable rising of the commons of Kent. Revolt of
Jack Cade,
1450.
Led by an Irish adventurer, named Jack Cade, who

gave out that he was an illegitimate son of the last earl of March, a formidable force of Kentish men marched towards London, and set up a fortified camp on Blackheath. They defeated the king's troops, and Henry was forced to flee before them from London to the midlands. On his retreat, the citizens opened their gates to the rebels. At first, Cade kept good order, but his followers soon got out of hand, slew the king's ministers, and began to rob the citizens of their property. Many of the Londoners now turned against them, and there was a formidable fight between the citizens and the rebels on London Bridge. At last, however, the Kentish men were persuaded to go home under promise of a general pardon. Cade now endeavoured to excite a fresh revolt in Sussex, but was slain by a Kentish squire. His death ended the rebellion. At first sight the revolt reminds us of the rising of 1381, but the only grievances of the commons of Kent in 1450 were political. Their rebellion was a protest against the maladministration which still prevailed at court. Even the fall of Suffolk had taught nothing to the king and his advisers, and the only way to clear the council of Suffolk's party seemed to be armed resistance.

17. Cade had made use of the name of Mortimer; and, soon after his death, the true heir of the Mortimers, Richard, duke of York, came to London from his Irish estates, and assumed the leadership of the opposition. The position
of Richard,
duke of
York.
York was the only son of Richard, earl of Cambridge, whom Henry v. had executed in 1415, and his wife, Anne Mortimer, sister and heiress of Edmund, the last earl of March of his house. From his grandfather, Edmund of Langley, third surviving son of Edward III., he inherited the duchy of York, but his real importance was due to his having inherited from his mother the earldoms of March and Ulster, with vast estates in the west of England and in

Ireland. Moreover, Anne Mortimer was the heiress of Lionel, duke of Clarence, so that her son represented the elder line of the descendants of Edward III. Neither York nor his friends, however, regarded him as a rival to Henry VI. as king. Duke Richard's object was rather to renew the policy of Thomas of Lancaster or Humphrey of Gloucester. He aimed at acting as the leader of the constitutional opposition, and his chief motive was to drive the unpopular courtiers from the king's council, and help Henry to rule more firmly. Henry and Margaret were, however, childless, and York was generally looked upon as the nearest heir to the throne.

18. About the time York came back from Ireland, the French conquest of Normandy compelled its discredited governor, Somerset, to return to England. Despite his proved incompetence and possible treachery, Somerset was cordially welcomed by king and queen, and forthwith put in the place which Suffolk had once occupied. York at once demanded the dismissal of Somerset from the king's counsels. The outcry against the unpopular duke was soon increased by the tidings of the loss of Gascony, and the king, who was weak and peace-loving, might well have yielded to the storm. Margaret of Anjou, however, possessed the vigour and manliness which were so singularly wanting in her husband, though unluckily she never understood England, and thought only of protecting her friends against their enemies. Through her support Somerset's position remained unassailable. At last, in 1452, York raised an army. He was, however, anxious to avoid civil war, and dismissed his forces on the king's pledging himself that he should be admitted to the council, while Somerset should be imprisoned until he cleared himself of the accusations brought against him. Margaret prevented her husband from carrying out his promise, and York soon found that he had been tricked. In 1453 the king lost his reason. In the same year the birth of a son to Henry and Margaret—Edward, prince of Wales—cut off York's prospects of a peaceful succession to the throne, while the tidings of the battle of Castillon came to increase the distrust generally felt for the negligent government. For a time the council carried on the administration in the king's name, but in 1454 parliament insisted on the appointment of a regent, and, to Margaret's disgust, the Lords chose York protector of England. Before the end of the year the king was restored to health, and York's protectorate was put to an end. Somerset was restored to power, and York was even excluded from the royal council. Irritated at this treatment, Duke Richard once

more appealed to arms. In 1455 he defeated his enemies at the battle of *St. Albans*, where Somerset was slain and the king wounded and taken prisoner. His agitation once more robbed Henry of his reason, and for a second time York was made protector.

19. The battle of *St. Albans* is generally described as marking the beginning of the Wars of the Roses, so called in later days because the house of York had a white rose as its badge, and the house of Lancaster was thought to have a red rose. In reality the red rose was not used till later, when it became the badge of the Tudors, who were the heirs of the Lancasters. The phrase Wars of the Roses, then, is a misnomer; but it is one so generally used that it may be allowed to stand. Whatever their name, these wars lasted for thirty years. It was not, however, a period of continued fighting, and affairs were not much more disorderly after the battle of *St. Albans* than before it. It was rather a period of short wars, divided by longer periods of weak government. The ultimate cause of the struggle was the inability of Henry VI. to govern England. Part of this was due to Henry's personal incompetence, but the root of the matter lay deeper. The long war with France had increased the greediness and ferocity of the English nobles, and now that they could no longer win booty and glory abroad, they began to fight fiercely with each other. Nothing but a strong king, able to enforce his will, could remedy this state of things. Since 1399, however, parliament had been so powerful that the crown had not enough power left to do its work. The Commons were not yet strong and coherent enough to take the lead, and parliamentary government meant, in practice, the rule of a turbulent nobility, which delighted in anarchy and was too proud to obey the law. The majority of the nobles were contented with the weak government of Henry, and even lent a steady support to Somerset. The Commons, on the other hand, longed for the restoration of order, and upheld the cause of Richard of York because they thought him vigorous enough to put an end to the prevailing misgovernment.

20. Though most of the nobles were Lancastrians, a few great houses supported the Yorkists. Conspicuous among these was the junior branch of the great Yorkshire family of the Nevilles, earls of Westmorland. The head of this was Richard Neville, who became by marriage earl of Salisbury, and whose sister Cicely was the wife of Richard of York. His eldest son, also named Richard Neville, became earl of

Character-
istics of the
Wars of
the Roses.

The House
of Neville.

Warwick by his marriage with the heiress of the Beauchamps. Both father and son had taken a prominent share in winning the battle of St. Albans, and henceforward they were the chief supporters of the Yorkists (see for the Nevilles table on page 294).

21. The second protectorate of York was even shorter than the first. Early in 1456 the king regained his wits, and York was forced to resign. The death of Somerset weakened the queen's party, and Henry, always honestly anxious to restore peace, allowed York to keep his place on the council. Both factions, however, bitterly hated each other, and every nobleman went about with a band of armed followers, even when attending royal councils. The country was hardly governed at all. Private wars became common, and the French commanded the Channel and plundered the coasts. Amidst the general confusion Warwick showed himself the strongest man in England. In 1458 he gained a naval victory over the French which saved England from invasion. Soon afterwards he quarrelled with Margaret and withdrew to Calais, of which he was governor, leaving the queen supreme. Next year (1459) Margaret strove to strengthen her position by an attack on Salisbury. War was at once renewed. Salisbury defeated Lord Audley, the queen's commander, at *Blore Heath* in Staffordshire, near Market Drayton. Soon afterwards Warwick returned from Calais. The two Nevilles joined Richard of York at Ludlow the centre of the Mortimer estates. Thereupon the king proceeded to the Welsh March, and showed such activity that he scattered the Yorkist forces without having to fight a battle. York took refuge in Ireland, while Warwick and Salisbury fled to Calais. After this flight a packed parliament at Coventry attainted all the Yorkist leaders. The triumph of the king seemed complete.

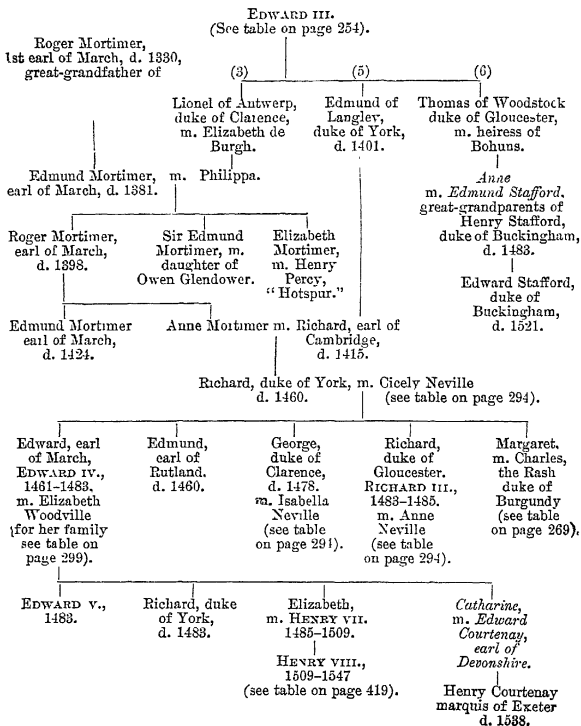
22. Henry's sudden burst of energy did not last long. The next year, 1460, Warwick and Salisbury came back to England, York claims and with them came Edward, earl of March, the the throne, duke of York's eldest son. On July 10 they fought 1460.

and won the *battle of Northampton*, when Henry was taken prisoner. York now returned from Ireland, and, when parliament assembled in October, claimed the throne as the nearest kin of Edward III. through Lionel of Clarence. The lords of parliament courageously rejected this claim, but agreed to a compromise, which Henry, to spare further bloodshed, also accepted. By this Henry was to keep the throne till his death, but York was declared his successor, and was to act as protector for the rest of the king's life.

Reconciliation and the renewal of the strife, 1455-1459.

23. After the battle of Northampton, Margaret had fled to Wales with her son Edward. She was bitterly indignant with her husband for his weak abandonment of the rights of their child, and resolved to carry on the struggle against Duke Richard. With that object she made her way to Scotland, where she obtained substantial help at the price of the surrender of Berwick. She was still in Scotland when the Lancastrian lords of Yorkshire rose in revolt against the rule of York. In December, Richard hurried to the north to suppress the rebellion. He kept his Christmas at his castle of Sandal, near Wakefield, which the enemy threatened to besiege. York scorned to be "caged like a bird," and on December 30 marched out of Sandal to offer battle to the superior forces of the Lancastrians. The fight which ensued, called the *battle of Wakefield*, cost him his army and his life. Salisbury, who was taken prisoner, was beheaded next day, and York's younger son, the earl of Rutland, was butchered after the fight by one of the Lancastrian lords. Thereupon Margaret hurried from Scotland and joined her victorious partisans. At the head of the fierce warriors of the north, she made her way to London. As she approached the capital, Warwick went out to intercept her at St. Albans, taking the king with him. On February 17, 1461, the *second battle of St. Albans* was fought, in which Warwick was completely defeated and Henry fell into his wife's hands. The wild north countrymen were, however, so much out of hand that even the reckless Margaret feared to lead them on to London lest they should wreak such atrocities as should permanently alienate the citizens from her cause. While she hesitated, Edward, earl of March, now duke of York by his father's death, effectively rallied his party. A fortnight before Margaret's victory, he had scattered the Lancastrians of the west at the battle of *Mortimer's Cross*, near Leominster. Thereupon he hastened towards London at the head of a great army of Welshmen and Marchers from his own estates. He joined Warwick's beaten troops on the way, and nine days after the battle of St. Albans, took possession of London. Soon after, Warwick's brother, George Neville, bishop of Worcester, the Yorkist chancellor, declared to the citizens that Edward might rightly claim the crown. On March 4, Edward seated himself on the royal throne in Westminster Hall and asked the people if they would have him as king. A shout of "Yea, yea!" rose from the assembly, and henceforth the pretender ruled as Edward iv.

GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF YORK, INCLUDING THE MORTIMERS
AND STAFFORDS



Persons not mentioned in the text in *italics*.

CHAPTER IV

EDWARD IV. (1461-1483)

Chief Dates :

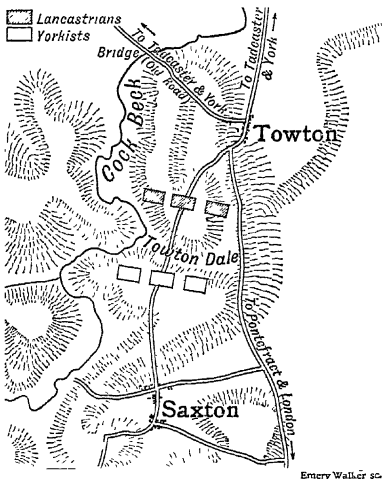
- 1461. Accession of Edward IV. and battle of Towton.
- 1464. Battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham.
- 1470. Restoration of Henry VI.
- 1471. Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury.
- 1475. Treaty of Picquigni.
- 1478. Death of Clarence.
- 1483. Death of Edward IV.

1. EDWARD IV. was only nineteen years old when he became king, but had already shown himself to be a born general and leader of men. He was exceedingly tall and good-looking, and his winning manners made him personally popular. He was inclined to carelessness and self-indulgence, but whenever he spurred himself to take action, he showed wonderful decision and vigour. Though pleasure-loving, greedy, and cruel, he was just the strong man needed to save England from anarchy. He owed his throne to his wisdom in the camp and in the cabinet, and few Englishmen concerned themselves as to whether he were the nearest heir of Edward III. All those parts of England, and all those classes of society to which peace and good order mattered most were his partisans. The townsman, the trader, and the artisan, the whole of the south and east, then the richest part of the country, were in his favour. The Londoners strongly supported him. Besides these, Edward owed much of his triumph to the steady backing of Warwick, who, after his father's death, united in himself the Beauchamp and Montagu inheritances. Warwick had enormous estates all over the country, and could raise an army of his own tenants in the west midlands. Gentlemen of good estate thought it an honour to wear his livery and display his badge of the bear and ragged staff. Men called him the *King-maker*, because he had done so much to win Edward the crown. His services to Edward were even more signal than those which the Percies had rendered to Henry IV. Another great source of

strength to the new king were his own vast estates, and especially the enormous territories which he inherited from the Mortimers.

2. Many still regretted the rule of Lancaster. There was still much sympathy for the gentle and unoffending king, and every tenant of the broad estates of the house of Lancaster felt personal devotion to his cause. Outside the fierce barons of the north, who had profited by his weakness to build up their own power. All the great names of the north

Battle of
Towton,
1461.



BATTLE OF TOWTON.

country, such as Clifford and Percy, were on his side, including even the senior branch of the house of Neville, which held the earldom of Westmorland. The natural antagonism of the Principality and the March made the Welsh good friends of Henry. Accordingly, when, after Edward's proclamation, Margaret hurried with her husband to the north, the Lancastrian partisans were still able to fight desperately. Edward at once followed Margaret to Yorkshire, and, on Palm Sunday, 1461, the decisive battle of the war was fought between the northern and southern armies

pushed south for London, which opened its gates to them on April 11. Thereupon Henry VI. was put back in the Tower, and Edward was once more recognized as king. Edward then marched out of London, and on Easter Sunday, April 14, gave battle to Warwick at *Barnet*, ten miles to the north of the capital. The fight took place in a thick mist, so that everything depended upon hard hand-to-hand fighting. Warwick and his brother John, marquis of Montagu, were slain on the field, and the death of the king-maker consummated the triumph of the Yorkists. With all his vigour and energy, Warwick had shown no striking capacity either as a soldier or as a statesman. His chief motive of action was the acquisition of power for himself and his family. He is the last conspicuous embodiment of the great baronial class whose turbulence had reduced England to anarchy.

8. Margaret, who had hitherto tarried in France, landed in the west of England along with her son on the fatal Easter Day which witnessed the ruin of her cause. Yet even The Battle of Tewkesbury, 1471. now a considerable force from the south-west and from Wales rallied round her. Edward hastened to check her progress, and on May 4 the Lancastrians stood at bay at *Tewkesbury*. Edward easily won the day, and took Margaret and Edward prisoners. The young prince of Wales was barbarously butchered, and the same fate befel the duke of Somerset, the third head of the house of Beaufort who had lost his life in the civil wars. Margaret was taken by her captors to London, and was kept in prison for the next five years, after which she was suffered to go home to France to die. Immediately after Edward's arrival in London, it was given out that her husband had died in the Tower, "out of pure displeasure and melancholy." It was generally believed that he was murdered, and rumour made Edward's brother, Richard of Gloucester, specially responsible for the crime. In truth, after his son's death, Henry's life was no longer valuable to Edward, so he ordered him to be slain without delay. Of all the cruel deeds of this pitiless time none was more wanton than the death of the harmless and saintly king.

9. Edward reigned in peace and without a rival for the rest of his life. His position was much stronger than in the earlier period of his rule, and he soon felt himself able to revenge himself on Louis XI. for abetting Warwick. In 1475 he agreed to unite with his brother-in-law, Charles of Burgundy, in a combined attack on France. Parliament gladly voted a liberal subsidy, and Edward marched out of Calais at the head of a large and brilliant force.

Much to his disgust, Charles joined him, not with an army, but almost alone. The duke of Burgundy had unwisely gone to war in Edward IV., Germany, though his French rival was still unbeaten. Burgundy, Edward and Charles disliked each other already, and and France. Charles's lack of faith gave the English king a good excuse for deserting so untrustworthy an ally. Louis, eager to win England to his side, was lavish in promises, and at last the two kings held a meeting on the bridge of Picquigni, a village on the Somme, between Abbeville and Amiens. So distrustful were they of each other that they kept themselves apart by a wooden partition, and talked through a grating. In the *treaty of Picquigni* Louis bought peace with England by the payment of a large sum of money, and a promise to marry his son to Edward's daughter. Edward then returned home, leaving Charles to his fate. Two years later, in 1477, the rash duke of Burgundy was slain at the battle of Nancy, in the course of an unsuccessful war which he had foolishly provoked with the Swiss. Louis XI. now annexed Burgundy to France, but could not prevent the Netherlands going to Mary, Charles's daughter, though not by his English wife, Margaret of York. Mary married the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, and we shall soon hear again of her descendants. Even after this check, Louis XI. was so powerful that he had no longer any need to humour the king of England. Just before the death of both kings in 1483, Louis repudiated the marriage arranged at Picquigni, and ceased paying subsidies to keep England quiet. Edward was so much mortified that the French believed he died of grief at the news of this breach with France. But for his death a renewal of war would have probably ensued.

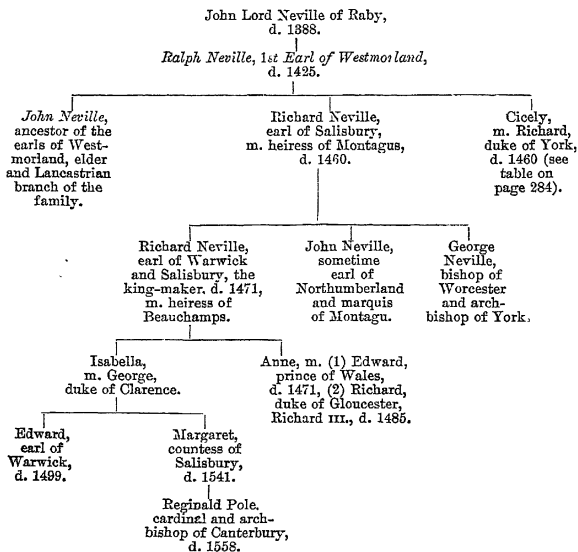
10. Edward was the strongest ruler of England since Edward III. He was popular with the people, and especially with the merchants, Home policy because he kept the nobles in good order and sternly of Edward put down private war. He ruled in a very different IV. fashion from that of the Lancastrians. He looked on parliaments with suspicion, and summoned them as seldom as he could. When he wanted money he did not always go to parliament, but often asked his subjects to give him what was called a *benevolence*. This was nominally a free gift offered by the subject to the king, but in reality those who were asked to give a *benevolence* dared not refuse to "pay it." Edward did not, however, risk the popularity which he loved by exacting too large sums from his subjects.

11. Clarence soon began once more to excite the suspicions of

the king. He had been fully pardoned for his treachery in 1470. He was made earl of Warwick and Salisbury, and hoped to secure for himself the whole inheritance of his father-in-law, the king-maker. He found, however, a rival for the Warwick estates in his younger and abler brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester. Anne Neville, Warwick's younger daughter, was the widow of the unfortunate son of Henry VI. In 1472 she was prevailed upon to marry Richard of Gloucester, the reputed murderer of her first husband. Henceforward the two brothers were rivals for the Neville and Beauchamp lands, and Clarence became very discontented when Edward assigned the larger portion of them to his brother. Things grew worse when Isabella Neville died, and Clarence sought to upset his brother's good understanding with France by a proposal, which came to nothing, that he should marry Mary of Burgundy, the heiress of Charles the Rash. Clarence now had against him the king, Gloucester, and the powerful kinsmen of the queen. In 1478 he was accused of treason, attainted in parliament, and condemned to execution. Edward was afraid to slay Clarence openly, and put him privately to death in the Tower. It was believed at the time that he was drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine. Five years later, in April, 1483, Edward IV. died.

Death of
Clarence,
1478, and
Edward IV.,
1483.

GENEALOGY OF THE NEVILLES



Persons not mentioned in the text in *italics*.

CHAPTER V

EDWARD V. AND RICHARD III. (1483-1485)

Chief Dates :

1483. Reign of Edward v. Accession of Richard III.

1485. Battle of Bosworth and death of Richard III.

1. EDWARD IV. left two sons. The elder, who was only twelve years old, now became Edward v., and his younger brother, Richard, had already been made duke of York. By the late king's will, the guardianship of the young king went to his uncle, Richard, duke of Gloucester, who was at once acknowledged as lord protector by the council. Richard had kept on good terms with the queen's kinsmen, and they doubtless expected to share power with him. The chief of the queen's family were her brother Antony Woodville, Earl Rivers, and her two sons by her first marriage, Thomas Grey, marquis of Dorset, and Sir Richard Grey. At the moment of his accession the young king was at Ludlow, in the custody of his uncle Rivers and his half-brother, Richard Grey. Fearful lest Gloucester should put an end to their influence, they formed a plan with the queen for Edward's immediate coronation, hoping that this would put an end to Gloucester's protectorate, and make the Woodvilles and Greys masters of the kingdom. The upstart kinsmen of the queen were, however, very unpopular, and were particularly disliked by the old nobles, whom they had driven from the court and council of the late king. The most important of the old nobles was Henry Stafford, duke of Buckingham, a descendant of Thomas of Woodstock, the son of Edward III., and the representative of the great house of the Bohuns. Buckingham, though married to a sister of the queen, was bitterly opposed to her policy. He made common cause with Gloucester, and the two allies showed great vigour in striking against their enemies. As the young king was riding from Ludlow to London, escorted by Rivers and Richard Grey, Gloucester and Buckingham fell upon him, took Rivers and Grey prisoners, and secured the personal

custody of Edward, whom they brought to London. In great alarm Queen Elizabeth fled for sanctuary to Westminster Abbey.

2. Gloucester's first move was so successful that it encouraged him to go further and aim at the crown. He found a fresh difficulty when some of the nobles, who had cordially supported him against the Woodvilles, refused to join with him in this further step. At the head of this party was Lord Hastings, a prominent friend of Edward iv., and, up to now, a conspicuous ally of Gloucester. Gloucester showed the same vigour against Hastings that he had shown against the Woodvilles. On June 13 he accused Hastings of treason, during a meeting of the council. After a stormy scene, Gloucester struck his fist sharply on the table, whereupon soldiers rushed in, dragged Hastings out, and at once cut off his head on a log of timber. Rivers and Grey were now executed, and Dorset only saved his life by flight beyond sea. The queen was persuaded to surrender the duke of York to the protector, who forthwith shut him up in the Tower, where the king was already in safe custody. The protector's next step was to win over the Londoners to his side. Next Sunday, June 22, his partisan, Dr. Shaw, brother of the mayor, delivered a sermon at St. Paul's on the text, "Bastard slips shall not take deep root." The preacher declared that Edward iv. had made a contract to marry another lady before he had wedded Elizabeth Woodville, and that therefore his marriage with her was invalid. As a result of this, the young king and his brother were illegitimate. Doubts were also cast on the lawful birth of Edward iv. and Clarence, and the duke of Gloucester was declared to be the rightful heir to the crown. The Londoners heard this strange tale in silence; but, two days later, Buckingham repeated Shaw's statements in the Guildhall to the mayor and chief citizens. The majority of his audience was still unmoved, but a few of the retainers of the two dukes raised shouts of "King Richard!" and their cry was supposed to be evidence that the city had declared itself in favour of the protector. Parliament met next day, and begged Richard to accept the throne. After a sham pretence of reluctance, Gloucester fell in with their wishes. On July 6 he was crowned Richard III. in Westminster Abbey. After this event nothing more is known as to the fate of the deposed Edward v. and his brother Richard of York. There is little doubt but that they were murdered in the Tower by their uncle's orders.

3. In the sordid revolution which made Richard III. king, Buckingham had played the part of a king-maker. Richard now

overwhelmed him with favours, and even promised to surrender to him the half of the Bohun estates which Henry IV., in the right of his mother, had brought to the crown. Yet Buckingham soon became discontented, and his inordinate ambition made him look still higher. In August he fled from court, and raised the standard of revolt at Brecon. At first he thought of claiming the throne for himself, but in the end he was prudent enough to unite with the remnants of the Lancastrian party, which was still strong in Wales. At the head of a considerable force of Welshmen, Buckingham marched as far eastwards as the Severn. But the river was in flood, and he could not effect a passage over it. This check soon proved fatal to his hopes. His forces melted away, and he was obliged to flee in disguise. Before long he was tracked to his hiding-place, and on November 2 was beheaded in the market-place of Salisbury.

4. Early in 1484 Richard met his parliament. It attainted Buckingham and the other enemies of the king, and passed many useful acts, conspicuous among which was a statute declaring benevolences illegal. Its proceedings show that Richard was making a bid for popular favour, and striving to pose as a constitutional Yorkist king. He was anxious to remove the bad impression created by the crimes through which he had won his way to the throne, and he was so able a man that he might very well have become a good ruler and a useful king if he had had the chance of developing his policy. However, his power rested on too narrow and personal a basis. He could not conciliate the Lancastrians, and he had hopelessly set against himself most of the supporters of York. He could expect no faithful service from the selfish nobles who had helped him to the throne, and constant intrigues and conspiracies made his position insecure. Moreover, domestic troubles further clouded his prospects. His only son and his wife died. Thereupon he thought of making his heir, Edward, earl of Warwick, the son of Clarence. Richard also proposed to marry his own niece Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV. and Elizabeth Woodville. Before this scheme could be carried out, a fresh revolt cost him his crown and his life.

5. After the murder of Henry VI. and his son, the main branch of the house of Lancaster had become extinct. The only representative of the line of John of Gaunt had now to be sought in the house of Beaufort, whose legitimate descent was more than doubtful. Even the house of Beaufort was extinct in the male line, when the last of the dukes

Richard III.
and Buck-
ingham.

Richard
III.'s policy,
1483-1485.

The Beau-
forts and
the Tudors.

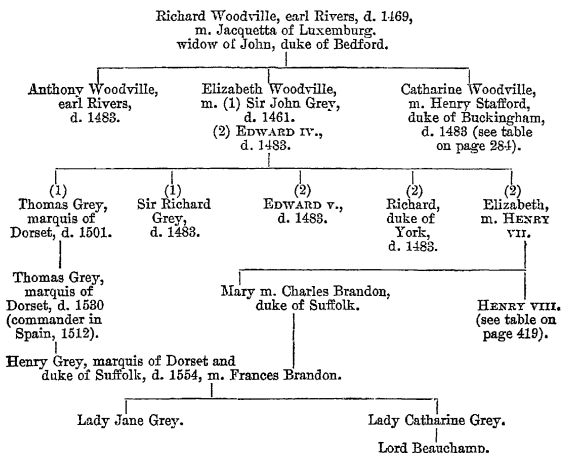
of Somerset was put to death on the battlefield of Tewkesbury. It was, however, still represented by the Lady Margaret Beaufort, daughter of John Beaufort, first duke of Somerset, and now the heiress of all the Beaufort claims. From her cradle the Lady Margaret had been a great heiress, and she had been married by Henry VI. to his half-brother, Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond. Richmond's father, Owen Tudor, was a Welsh gentleman who had neither high rank nor great possessions. He was good-looking, plausible, and attractive, and won the heart of Henry VI.'s mother, Catharine of France. To the great scandal of the court, Catharine, the widow of a king of England and the daughter of a king of France, took this Welsh squire for her second husband, and had by him two sons. The elder of these was the Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond, who was married to the Lady Margaret, while the younger, Jasper, became earl of Pembroke. Edmund Tudor had long been dead, but his son by Margaret, Henry Tudor, inherited the earldom of Richmond, and was now, for the lack of a better, the only possible head of the house of Lancaster. to which all the Tudors were entirely loyal. Both Henry Tudor and his uncle Jasper had long been living in exile in Brittany. The split in the house of York, consequent on Richard's usurpation, had revived the hopes of the Lancastrians, so that Henry Tudor now became an important personage. Though Margaret was still alive, Henry was regarded as the only possible Lancastrian monarch. Buckingham, when he revolted from Richard, declared himself in favour of Richmond's claims to the throne, and, after Buckingham's fall, all who wished to put an end to Richard's power looked to the exile in Brittany as the most likely instrument of their wishes. Prominent among Richard's supporters were the brothers Thomas and William Stanley, the heads of a rising house which had already attained a great position in south-west Lancashire. Like Buckingham, the Stanleys were disloyal to Richard, and Thomas, the elder, was now the husband of the Lady Margaret, Richmond's mother. While still remaining in Richard's confidence they intrigued with the Breton exiles.

6. In 1485, Richmond and Pembroke left Brittany for France, where Charles VIII., who had succeeded his father, Louis XI., in 1483, received them with favour, and helped them with men and money. In the summer they crossed over from Harfleur to Milford Haven, where they landed at the head of a small army. The Welsh flocked in large numbers to their countryman's

The battle of Bosworth and the death of Richard III., 1485.

standard, so that Henry Tudor was strong enough to march through Wales into the Midlands and challenge Richard's throne. On August 22 the decisive battle between Henry and Richard was fought at *Market Bosworth*, in Leicestershire. During the struggle William Stanley deserted Richard for Henry, and this settled the fortunes of the day. Richard perished, fighting desperately to the last. When the field was won, Thomas Stanley, who had taken no part in the action, came up and joined the victor. At the end of the fight, the crown, discovered in a hawthorn bush, was placed by Thomas Stanley on his stepson's head. Henceforth the Lancastrian exile was King Henry VII.

GENEALOGY OF THE GREYS AND WOODVILLES



CHAPTER VI

BRITAIN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

1. THE fifteenth century in England witnessed no great changes in the constitution. We have seen how, in the earlier part of it,

The constitution in the fifteenth century.

the Lancastrian rulers were so completely controlled by their parliament that in a fashion their government seems to anticipate our modern cabinet system. But the times were too rough to make such a method of government practicable. The supremacy of parliament

meant in effect the increase of the power of the nobility, and the rule of the nobles meant constant factions and threatened anarchy. The Lancastrian constitutional experiment perished in the Wars of the Roses, and the result of the failure was the restoration of a strong monarchy under Edward IV., who prepared the way for the still stronger rule of the Tudors. With the decay, alike in numbers and in power, of the baronial aristocracy, one characteristic feature of mediæval English society was removed.

2. The Church, like the nobility, had seen its best days. It had escaped the threatened danger of Lollardy, and seemed out-

The Church. wardly as powerful as ever. Never was it more wealthy or magnificent, and never did churchmen take a more prominent share in the national life. But it had lost the old vigour and spiritual force which had marked the Church of the thirteenth century. Its characteristic leaders were political ecclesiastics, who spent their days in the service of the State, and received their reward from the wealth of the Church. In the days of St. Thomas of Canterbury it had been thought impossible for the same man to be archbishop of Canterbury and the king's minister. In the fifteenth century it became a regular custom to make the southern primate lord chancellor. The State had no longer anything to fear from the restlessness or the encroachments of the Church, for the Church in its half-conscious weakness leant upon the support of the State, and had little wish to assert itself against the secular power. There was little energy and small wish for reform, though the abuses of the Church were great, and a few earnest men were still found who were anxious to make things

better. It was not so much the corruption as the worldliness of the Church that was so conspicuous. There were few spiritual leaders of the people, and the most active and public-spirited of the bishops were those who lavished their wealth on pious foundations, on erecting magnificent colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, and in building schools to supply them with scholars.

3. In the universities also there was the same want of life and freshness. After the silencing of Wycliffe, Oxford sank back into orthodoxy, but showed little energy and produced few noteworthy writers or thinkers. Both Oxford and Cambridge were adorned with magnificent buildings, great and well-endowed colleges, and stately and well-stocked libraries. Conspicuous among these new foundations were *New College*, at Oxford, the creation of Bishop William of Wykeham, and *King's College*, at Cambridge, which was established by Henry VI. Both the bishop and the king founded great schools in connection with their colleges, to supply them with students. Wykeham thus set up Winchester school, and Henry VI. Eton. But though such measures rendered the means of study more accessible, the spirit that inspired study was seldom very strong. The best thought and literature were outside the universities, which remained the homes of the decaying scholasticism of the Middle Ages.

4. Deficient as was the fifteenth century in strenuous purpose and high ideals, its history is in no wise altogether a history of decline. Despite the fierce fighting at home and abroad, England did not altogether stand still. The quarrels of kings and nobles affected but little the life of the ordinary man. Even during the Wars of the Roses the simple Englishman managed to till his farm and sell his goods, with little regard to the clash of party strife. Farmers thrived by reason of good harvests and improvements in cultivation. Villeinage steadily died out because it was more profitable to cultivate the soil by means of free labour. In particular, the constant demand for English wool from the Netherlands made sheep-farming a profitable business for farmer and landlord alike. All classes prospered through the increase of trade and the beginnings of our foreign commerce; when Edward IV. began to bring back order and strong government, progress became rapid. Population increased greatly, though it was still not very high, and England probably numbered at the end of our period about four million inhabitants.

5. In the towns trade was brisk and increasing. It was the time of the greatest influence of the *craft-guilds*. These were clubs

The uni-
versities
and learn-
ing.

Prosperity
of the
fifteenth
century.

or societies formed by members of each of the chief trades practised within a town. They served as benefit societies to shield their members from misfortunes, and as social clubs which celebrated holidays by feasts, processions, and solemn services in church. Besides thus encouraging self-help and good-fellowship, they kept prices steady, watched over the quality of the articles produced, and protected the guild brethren from undue competition and the cutting down of profits. Foreign commerce was on the increase, and at last a fair proportion of it was falling into English hands. In earlier days the *Easterlings*, or merchants from the Hanse towns of Northern Germany, the Venetians, and other Italians, had the bulk of English commerce in their own hands. Since the great naval victories of Edward III. Englishmen took more readily to the sea. Shipbuilding developed, and numerous commercial treaties opened up foreign ports to English enterprise. The English merchants formed societies for mutual assistance. Of these the most famous was the society of the *Merchant Adventurers*, which set up its factories in the Scandinavian kingdoms, and began to compete successfully with the Hanse merchants for the trade of the Baltic and North Sea. London was crowded with ships, and flourished exceedingly. Bristol, the chief western port, prospered on account of the Irish trade, and obtained a large share of the commerce with Iceland, whose stormy seas were a rare school of seamanship. The export of wool, still our chief product, was mainly conducted through Calais, the seat of the staple, and now a thoroughly English town. As the open door through which English wool was exported to the clothing towns of the Netherlands, it was as important in commerce as it was in politics as the gate which opened up France to the invasion of English armies.

6. The increased prosperity of the towns and country alike was seen in the increasing number and splendour of the churches and public buildings. A large number of stately and magnificent parish churches were erected all over the land. They were built in the *Perpendicular* style of Gothic architecture, which continued to be the one fashion of building until the middle of the sixteenth century. The later Perpendicular buildings were even more costly and spacious than those of the reign of Edward III., and were infinitely more numerous. One feature of the style was the erection of beautiful and richly adorned towers; others were the magnificent timber roofs, or the fantastic and elaborate stone vaulting, in which ornament and decoration

Late Perpendicular architecture.

were pursued for their own sake. The culmination of this is to be found in the *fan tracery* of the vaults of Henry VI.'s chapel of King's College, Cambridge, or Henry VII.'s chapel at the east end of Westminster Abbey, both characteristic buildings of the period. Though this style is less pure than the earlier Gothic, it is still very rich, impressive, and magnificent. Nor were churches, colleges, and monasteries the only structures which men now set up. Private houses were now built in a more durable and comfortable fashion, and even the warlike nobles gave up erecting gloomy castles for their abodes, preferring in their stead large, Domestic well-lighted, and roomy mansions, which, though buildings, following the lines of the old castles, and capable of standing a siege, were built with a primary regard for the comfort of those living in them rather than with the view of keeping out the enemy. Magnificent specimens of the castellated mansions of the nobles of this period are to be seen in the ruined houses of Tattershall, in Lincolnshire, and Hurstmonceaux, in Sussex, both of which belong to the reign of Henry VI. They are both remarkable as being among the earliest brick buildings erected in England since Roman times. By the end of the century the fashion of building in brick had become common, and made it easier to erect substantial houses in districts where stone was scarce or bad.

7. New styles in dress and customs showed how general was the change of taste. Armour became more costly and elaborate than ever, and efforts were made to strengthen it in such a fashion as would protect the wearer from bullets and Armour and arrows as well as from the thrust or cut of lance or weapons. sword. The use of firearms became more general, and light hand-guns, the predecessors of the later musket, were beginning to come into use. Yet the long-bow, now at its prime, was still generally preferred in England to these clumsy and uncertain weapons. It was abroad rather than at home that new experiments were now made in the art of war. The French adopted the use of artillery more readily than the English, and it was by reason of the excellence and number of their cannon that they discomfited the long unconquerable English archer, notably at the battle of Castillon, which closed the Hundred Years' War.

8. The literature of the fifteenth century reflects the general character of the age. Since the death of Chaucer there was no more poetry of the highest rank, but the style of Literature. Chaucer was imitated by a whole school of versifiers, who wrote fluently, freely, and vigorously, though with little

originality or artistic gift. The best poetry of the time is to be found in the large number of anonymous *ballads*, some of which are of a high order of excellence. Another feature was the growth of a popular drama, which was chiefly represented by religious dramas called *Mysteries*, or *Miracle-plays*, wherein were enacted stories from Scripture, or sermons in verse, setting forth the mysteries of the faith. It became the custom for the townsmen to amuse themselves on holidays by witnessing miracle-plays of this kind, acted in temporary theatres erected in the streets and public squares. We have still extant the cycles of dramas that delighted the citizens of Chester, York, and Wakefield during this period.

Poetry and the drama. 9. Prose was better than poetry. There was a larger reading public, but it was not very particular as to the quality of what it read so long as it was amusing or instructive. The monastic chronicles became few and feeble, as the vigour of the religious life declined; but as a compensation great men began to employ private *historiographers*, who set down in prose or verse the deeds of their patrons. These men were sometimes the heralds or chaplains of their employers, and sometimes foreigners, especially Italians, who were brought into the country by noblemen and prelates anxious to show their sympathy for the wider and fuller literary movements of lands beyond the sea. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, was the most bountiful and broad-minded of these noble patrons of letters. He had in his pay an Italian who called himself Titus Livius, and wrote at his master's bidding a Latin life of Henry v. The Percies employed an Englishman named John Harding to compose a metrical history of their house, wherein he took good care not to minimize the glories of the distinguished family to which he owed his bread. It is a sign of the greater extension of knowledge and the spread of the practice of composition that we have for the first time collections of private and familiar correspondence, which give us a much more vivid idea of what ordinary men thought and said than can be gathered from the stiff and formal official letters of state which alone survive from earlier ages. Conspicuous among such collections are the *Paston Letters*, the correspondence of a pushing and rising family of Norfolk squires, which give us far the best picture that we have of the state of society during the Wars of the Roses.

10. The increased demand for books led to the existence of a large class of *scriiveners* and *stationers*, whose business was to copy out and sell volumes for which there was a constant popular

demand. The skill shown by these men was great, and they multiplied books with as much faithfulness and quickness as were possible, so long as every fresh example had to be written out by hand. But the impossibility of producing books by the laborious process of copying them out in manuscript set men's brains to work to devise means of multiplying them by mechanical devices. In the course of this century the invention of *printing* was soon to make obsolete the painful art of the scrivener.

Spread of
reading.

11. The first books produced by mechanical means were what were called *block-books*. In these the matter which had to be reproduced was written on flat blocks of wood, and then the rest of the surface of the block was cut away so that the pattern written stood out in relief, and when smeared over with oily ink, could be pressed or printed upon pieces of paper, much as wood-cuts were multiplied in later times. This method was only possible for short works of considerable circulation, since it was slow and costly, and the blocks were useless save for the one purpose for which they were designed. For about a century, however, *block-books* were the only alternatives to manuscripts, until about the middle of the fifteenth century, the ingenuity of John Gutenberg, a citizen of Mainz, in Germany, devised the method of casting movable types in metal to correspond to the various letters and characters. These types could then be set up to represent any combination of letters, and when the copies needed were printed off, the type could be distributed and rearranged to make a fresh book. Gutenberg's great invention soon spread all over Europe, and that the more rapidly since the first book he printed, a *Latin Bible*, issued in 1455, was of such extraordinary beauty as to rival or surpass the best type of manuscript. The result of the spread of printing was that books became suddenly cheapened and multiplied, and that a great impetus was given to reading and study.

The inven-
tion of
printing.

12. In Edward iv.'s time printing was brought into England by a Kentishman named William Caxton, a shrewd and successful merchant, settled for many years in Flanders, who learnt in the Netherlands and in Germany the new art about which all interested in books were talking. He bought types from a Flemish printer, and, about 1474, produced with them at Bruges, in Flanders, the first printed books in English. These were a romance called a *Recuyell of the Histories of Troy*, and a treatise on *The Game and Play of Chess*. In 1477, Caxton went back to England, and set up his press under the shadow of Westminster

William
Caxton,
the first
English
printer.

Abbey, where he printed and published many books, both in English and Latin. Caxton was not only a good business man but a competent scholar, who wrote prefaces to his books and translated many of them into English. Edward IV. and Richard III. and the more cultivated nobles were his patrons. After his death in 1491, his press went to his pupil, Wynkyn de Worde. Other men followed their example, and before the end of the century, the art of printing was firmly established in England. So powerful was the press by this time, that the king and the Church would allow only those books to be printed which had obtained a licence.

13. One feature of this period is the growth of an independent English-speaking state in Scotland. So constant was the hostility of the northern and southern kingdoms that it was Scotland in the fifteenth century. to France rather than to its neighbour that the little Scottish kingdom looked for support and guidance. It was characteristic that, for example, Scottish buildings which in earlier ages had been erected after the same fashion as those in England, now followed the French rather than the English style. Thus there is hardly any *Perpendicular* Gothic in Scotland, though builders were as busy beyond the Tweed as in England during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Scottish churches of this time follow in preference the *Flamboyant* or late Gothic of France, which differs in some ways more widely from contemporary English art than any other mediæval style. A comparison of the *Flamboyant* churches of Melrose or St. Giles, Edinburgh, with the English churches of the same date, will show how deeply divided against itself English-speaking Britain had become. It was the same with domestic architecture, where the Scottish barons erected for themselves imitations of French castles rather than English manor-houses. When in 1508 the art of printing was tardily introduced into Scotland, it was in France that the earliest Scottish printers learnt their craft. In law, in the same way, the Scots looked to France and the Roman Civil Law rather than to the customary law of England, which was originally common to all parts of the English-speaking race. In literature, also, the court speech of Edinburgh was, as we have seen, the old Northumbrian dialect, and not the Midland tongue which Caxton, like Chaucer, adopted as the most appropriate for English literary speech. Yet the ties of common language still counted for something. James I., a cultivated and intelligent king, brought back from his long English captivity a sincere love for Chaucer's poetry, and wrote his own poem, called the *Kingis Quhair*, in the style of

the southern master. From this time the fashion of Chaucer took a deep hold on Scottish men of letters. All through the fifteenth century Scots poets, like Robert Henryson, set forth in the northern form of English spirited imitations and adaptations of Chaucer's themes and metres, which show that there was more true poetic spirit to the north than to the south of the Tweed. The reigns of the early Stewart kings witnessed in this, and in many other ways, a wonderful growth of civilization, order, and prosperity. Historians of the school of Barbour described the stirring deeds of the heroes of the War of Independence, and a wandering minstrel called Blind Harry wrote a rude poetic romance on the exploits of Wallace, the great popular hero of the north. The same period also witnessed the establishment of three Scottish universities at St. Andrews, Aberdeen, and Glasgow, so that the northern scholar had no longer to leave his own land to obtain a learned education. Save in the wild Highlands beyond the Forth, where the unchanging Celtic civilization still went on without a rival, Scotland, like England, was becoming awake to the new issues that were soon to excite the interest of all Europe.

14. The changes which we have sketched show that fifteenth-century Britain was by no means standing still, though it was not now, as it had been, fully abreast of the Continent. Everywhere the Middle Ages were slowly dying away. It was an age of discoveries, of new inventions, of greater love of knowledge, and of a wider interest in man and nature. Before long, Columbus was to make his way to the new world called America. It was already the time of the *Revival of Letters*, or the *Renaissance*—that is, the new birth of learning and thought. None of the new movements had as yet reached Britain, but elsewhere, and especially in Italy, there had been wonderful progress made in many directions. Even in our island some men were beginning to be interested in the new tendencies. Those who read deeply began to think for themselves. When men began to think for themselves, modern times were already at hand.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR THE FURTHER STUDY OF THE PERIOD 1399-1485

Oman's *History of England*, 1377-1485, in Longmans' Political History of England, vol. iv.; Stubbs' *Constitutional England*, vol. iii., which includes the best survey of the political history of the period; James Gairdner's *Houses of Lancaster and York* (Longmans' Epochs of Modern History); A. G. Bradley's *Owen Glyndwr* and C. L. Kingsford's *Henry V.* (both in Heroes of the Nations); Oman's *Warwick the King Maker*, a spirited sketch (Macmillan's Men of Action). For Caxton and his successors, see E. G. Duff's *Early Printed Books*, ch. viii.-xi. The *Paston Letters*, edited with valuable introductions by James Gairdner, throw a flood of light on the political and social history of the period.

INDEX TO PART I

- ABBEVILLE**, 265, 292.
Aberdeen, university of, 397.
Abernethy, 93.
Acre, 133.
Adela, daughter of William I., 111.
Adelaide, of Louvain, queen of Stephen, 103.
Ælfgar, E. of Mercia, 63.
Ælfheah, archbishop of Canterbury, 58.
Ælle, Saxon chieftain, 18.
Æthelfrith, K. of Bernicia, 21, 27, 39.
Agnincourt, battle of, 265-266.
Agricola, Julius, in Britain, 9.
Aidan, bishop of Northumbria, 32.
Aiguillon, battle of, 216.
Akeman Street, the, 11.
Alaric, the Goth, 14.
Alban, St., Christian martyr, 12.
Albigenses, the, 163.
Alcuin, of York, 35.
Aldermen, royal officers, 78. *See also* Earls.
Alexander III, pope, 120.
 — III., K. of Scots, 185-187.
Alfred the Great, 43-49.
Allectus, his rule over Britain, 12.
Alnwick, 125, 127; battle of, 99.
Alphege, St., archbishop of Canterbury, 58.
Amiens, 189, 265, 292.
 — cathedral of, 245.
 — Mise of, 171.
 — treaty of (1279) 189.
Anderida, fort of, 14, 18. *See also* Evesham.
Angers, 108.
Angles, the, their settlement in Britain, 16.
Anglesey, 181. *See also* Mona.
Anjou, 108, 115, 116, 126, 139, 189, 277.
Annan, 209.
Anne, of Bohemia, queen of Richard II., 233, 234.
 — *See also* Neville, Anne.
Anselm, St., archbishop of Canterbury, 97-99, 103, 117, 119.
Antoninus Pius, emperor, the wall of, 10.
Aosta, 97.
Aquæ Sulis, 11. *See also* Bath.
Aquitaine, 203, 206, 219, 221, 271; Eleanor of, queen, 115, 126. *See* Eleanor.
 — Richard, duke of, 127. *See* Richard I.
 — Edward prince of, 219. *See* Edward the Black Prince.
Archers, 70, 215, 249, 303.
Architecture, 153, 245-247, 302-303.
Armagnacs, the, 259, 260, 267, 271.
Arms and armour, 152, 248, 303.
Arras, Congress at, (1435), 276.
Arvelde, James van, of Ghent, 211.
Arthur, K., 28.
 — of Brittany, 137, 138, 139.
Articuli super Curias, 195.
Arundel family (*see also* Fitzalan), 233, 234, 235.
 — lordship of, 103.
 — archbishop of Canterbury, 256, 260, 262.
Ashdown, battle of, 14.
Ashington, battle of, 59. *See* Assandun.
Assandun (Ashington), battle of, 59.
Asser, bishop, biographer of Alfred the Great, 49.
Assize, of Clarendon, 123.
 — of Northampton, 123.
 — the Grand, 123.
 — of Arms, 124.
 — of Woodstock, or of the Forest, 124, 160.
Athelney, Alfred the Great at, 44.
Athelstan, reign of, 51-52.
Auberoche, battle of, 216.
Audley, Lord, 282.
Augustine, St., archbishop of Canterbury, mission of, 29-31.
Auvergne, mountains of, 126.
Avebury, megalithic monuments at, 3.
Avignon, residence of the popes at, 195, 223, 229.
Avrauchun, the, 100.
BALDWIN, archbishop of Canterbury, 125.
Ball, John, 230, 232.
Balliol, John, lord of Galloway, 188-189; K. of Scots, 191, 192, 209.
 — Edward, 209.
Bamburgh, castle of, 95.
Banbury, 289.
Bannockburn, battle of, 200-201.
Barbour, John, his Scottish Chronicle, 252, 307.
Barnet, battle of, 291.
Barons' War, the, 170.
Bath, 184. *See also* Aquæ Sulis.
Battle, the abbey of, 154.
Bavaria, the emperor Louis of, 211.
Bayonne, 126, 221, 222, 278.
Beauchamp, Thomas, E. of Warwick, 234.
 — *See also* Warwick.
Beaufort, house of, 260, 297-298.
 — John, E. of Somerset, 260. *See also* Somerset.
 — Henry, bishop of Winchester, 260, 262, 272, 275-277.
 — Thomas, chancellor, 280.
 — Jane, wife of James I. of Scotland, 271.
 — Edmund, D. of Somerset, 277. *See also* Somerset.
 — Margaret, 298.
Beaugé, battle of, 268.
Beaumaris, castle of, 247.
Bec, in Normandy, monastery of, 90, 97.
Becket, St., Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, 117-122, 150.
Bede, English historian, 35.
Bedford, castle of, 161.
 — John, D. of, 270-276.
Bellême, Robert of. *See* Robert.
Benedict, of Nursia, St., 55.
Bengeworth, village of, 174.
Berengaria of Navarre, queen of Richard I., 132.
Berkeley, castle of, 204.
Bernicia, 19, 27, 32, 51.
Bertha, wife of Ethelbert of Kent, 28, 29.
Bertrand de Born, 131.
Berwick, on Tweed, 189, 209, 258.
 — near Shrewsbury, 258.
Bigod, Roger, E. of Norfolk, 193.
Birinus, Wessex converted by, 33.
Biscay, Bay of, 126.
Black Death, the, 216.
Blackheath, 279.
Blanche, duchess of Lancaster, 225.
Blanchetaque, 214, 264.
Blangy, 265.
Bloddyn, Welsh prince, 65.
Blois, domains of the counts of, 111.
 — Charles of, 213, 216.
 — Henry of. *See* Henry, of Blois, bishop of Winchester.
 — Stephen of. *See* Stephen, K.
Blore Heath, battle of, 282.
Boadicea. *See* Boudicca.
Boccaccio, 251.
Bohemia, Huss in, 267.
 — Anne of, queen of Richard II., 232-234.
 — *See* Anne.

- Bohun, Humphrey, E of Hereford, 193. *See* Hereford
 Boniface, English missionary in Germany, 34
 — viii, pope, 192, 195
 — of Savoy, archbishop of Canterbury, 164
 Bordeaux, 126, 165, 166, 217, 219, 221, 222, 278.
 Born, Bertrand de, 131
 Boroughbridge, battle of, 202.
 Bosworth, battle of, 299
 Boudicca, queen of the Iceni, 8, 9
 Boulogne, 100, 111, 114.
 — Godfrey of. *See* Godfrey
 — Stephen of *See* Stephen, king
 — Matilda of *See* Matilda, queen
 Bourges, "the king of," 271.
 Bouvines, battle of, 140
 Brabant, D. of, 211.
 Bramham Moor, battle of, 259.
 Brecon, 100, 297.
 Brest, 222.
 Brétigni, treaty of, 219.
 Bridgnorth, castle of, 104.
 Brigantes, tribe of the, 8, 9.
 Brigham, the treaty of, 188.
 Bristol, 114, 151, 203.
 Britain, early, 1-17; church of, 28, 29
Britannia, Superior, Inferior, Prima, Secunda, 10
 Britons, the, 4-21.
 Brittany, 293.
 — Geoffrey of, 127
 — D. of, 271.
 — John of, 196.
 — disputed succession to, 213, 216
 Bronze Age, the, 3.
 Bruce, David, K. of Scots, son of King Robert, 205, 208-210, 216.
 — Edward, brother of King Robert Bruce, 225.
 — Robert, Lord of Annandale, 188
 — E. of Carrick, grandson of the above, afterwards K. of Scots, 196, 200-202, 205, 206, 208, 225.
 Bruges, 61, 211
 Brunanburh, battle of, 52.
 Brythons, the, 2 *See* Britons.
 Buch, the Captal de, 217
 Buckingham, Henry Stafford, D. of, 295, 296, 297.
 Bulls, papal, 92.
 Burgh Castle, 14. *See* Gariannonum.
 Burgh-on-Sands, 196.
 Burgh, Hubert de, justiciar, 160, 161, 162
 Burgundians, the, 259, 267, 271, 275, 288.
 Burgundy, 133.
 — John the Fearless, D. of, 259, 267.
 — Philip the Good, D. of, 267, 271, 275, 276
 — Charles the Rash, D. of, 288-292.
 — Mary of, 292.
 Burnell, Robert, bishop of Wells and chancellor, 179, 182, 184, 185.
 Bury St Edmunds, 231.
 CADE, Jack, 279.
 Cadwallon, Welsh King, 31.
 Caedmon, Anglo-Saxon poet, 35.
 Caen, 93, capture of, 214.
 Caerleon-on-Usk, 8 *See* Isca Silurum.
 Caerphilly, castle of, 248.
 Cæsar, Gaius Julius, 6, 7.
 Caithness, Norse settlers in, 42.
 Calais, 222, 235, 264, 266, 291; siege of, 216; treaty of, 219.
 Caledonians, the, 9, 10, 12.
 Cambridge, 244, 301.
 — Richard, E. of, 264.
 Cambuskenneth, abbey of, 194
 Camulodunum, 7, 8.
 Canons Regular, the 154
 Canterbury, 30, 75, 117, 120, 121, 122, 125, 140.
 — archbishops of *See* Augustine, Theodore, Tunstan, Alphege, Jumièges William of, Stigand, Lanfranc, Anselm, Corbeil William of, Becket St Thomas, Hubert Walter, Langton Stephen, Rich Edmund, Boniface of Savoy, Kilwardy Robert, Peckham John, Winchelsea Robert, Arundel Thomas.
Canterbury Tales, Chaucer's, 251
 Cantreds, the four, of North Wales, 176
 Caractacus, son of Cunobelinus, 7, 8.
 Carausius, Roman admiral, 12
 Cardiff, castle of, 93
 Cardigan, 181.
 Carisbrook, castle of, 152
 Carlisle, 9, 99.
 Carmarthen, 181; bay of, 166, 258.
 Carnarvon, 181. *See also* Segontium.
 — castle of, 247
 — Edward of, 182, 187. *See also* Edward II
 Cassivellaunus, 7.
 Castile, K. of, 129.
 — civil war in, 219-22
 Castillon, battle of, 278.
 Castles, 152, 247-248
 Catherine of France, queen of Henry V., 267, 298.
 Caxton, William, printer, 305-306.
 Ceadda, Northumbrian missionary, 32, 33.
 Ceawlin, K. of Wessex, 21, 27
 Cedd, St., missionary in Essex and bishop of London, 33.
 Celts, the, 2-4, 20, 24.
 Cenulf, K. of Mercia, 38.
 Cerdic, West Saxon chief, 18.
 Chad, St., bishop of Lichfield, 32, 33. *See also* Ceadda.
 Châlus, 135.
 Champagne, 273, 275
 Chancellor, office of, 119, 147.
 Chancery, the Court of, 242.
 Channel Islands, the, 169
 Charles, K. of France, IV., 203, 206.
 — — V., 219, 221, 228.
 — VI., 228, 259, 267, 270.
 — VII., 267, 268, 271.
 — son of K. John of France, 218, 219.
 See also Charles V., K. of Spain.
 — I., the Great, emperor, 35, 37, 39
 — of Anjou, K. of Sicily, 169.
 Château Gaillard, 135, 139, 153, 347.
 Chaucer, Geoffrey, 251, 252, 300-307.
 Cherbourg, 222
 Cheshire, 240
 Chester, 8, 21, 27, 54, 75, 90, 114, 236, 304 *See also* Deva
 — battle of, 21.
 — palatine earldom of, 87, 167, 170, 182
 Chichester, lordship of, 103.
 Chinon, 272, 273.
 Chivalry, 249.
 Christ Church, Canterbury, 121, 140-141. *See also* Canterbury
 Church, the, 79-80, 90-92, 112, 140-143, 242, 300.
 Cinque Ports, the, 151.
Circumspecte Agatus, law called, 184.
 Cistercians, order of the, 133, 151.
 Clare, Richard of, E. of Gloucester, 169-170.
 See also Gloucester, E. of.
 — Gilbert of, E. of Gloucester, son of above, 170, 174, 176. *See also* Gloucester, E. of.
 — E. of Gloucester, son of above, 199, 201.
 See also Gloucester, E. of
 Clarence, John, D. of, 268

- Clarence, Lionel, D. of, 280.
 — George, D. of, 287, 288, 290, 292, 293.
 Clarendon, Constitutions of, 119.
 Claudius, emperor, conquest of Britain in the reign of, 8.
 Clement, the anti-pope, 98.
 — V., pope, 195.
 — VII., pope, 239.
Clericus Laicos, bull, 192.
 Clifford, house of, 286.
 Clitheroe, 287.
 Cluny, teaching of the monks of, 91.
 Clwyd, the vale of, 65, 176.
 Cnut, K. of England and Denmark, 59-60; earldoms of, 60, 78.
 Colchester. *See also* Camulodunum.
 Colman, Scottish bishop, 33.
 Columba, St., 24, 29.
 Columbus, Christopher, 307.
 Cobham, Eleanor, wife of Humphrey of Gloucester, 276.
 — Lord *See also* Oldcastle, Sir John.
 Cock, the river, 287.
 Common Pleas, the Court of, 241.
 Compiègne, 275.
 Comyn, John, of Badenoch, 196.
Confirmatio Cartarum, the, 193.
 Conisborough, castle of, 152.
Consilium Ordinarium, the, 241.
 Constable, office of, 147.
 Constance of Castile, wife of John of Gaunt, 232.
 — council of, 266.
 Constantine, the first Christian emperor, 12.
 Constantinople, 29.
 Convocation, 239.
 Conway, the treaty of, 179; castle of, 247.
 Corbeil, William of, archbishop of Canterbury, 111.
 Cork, 125.
 Cornwall, 3, 14, 77.
 — Richard, E. of, 166.
 — Gaveston made E. of, 199.
 Cōtentin, the, sold by Robert of Normandy, 100, 103.
 — Edward III. lands in, 214.
 Courtenay, Bishop, of London, 227.
 Covenry, Parliament at, 282.
 Cravant, battle of, 271.
 Crécy, battle of, 214-215.
 Crusade, the First, 100, 101; the third, 131-133.
 Cumberland, 21, 52, 99.
 Cumbria, the northern division of the Welsh, 21.
 Cunobelinus, 7.
 Customs, the, 183.
Curia Regis, the, 107, 117, 147.
 Cynric, son of Cerdic, Saxon chief, 18.
 DANFELD, levy of, 58.
 Danelaw, the, 45, 46, 50, 74.
 Danes, the, 40-48, 50-52, 57-58, 80, 84, 125.
 Daniel, first bishop of Bangor, 28.
 Dante, 251.
 David, Saint, 28.
 — I., K. of Scots, 106, 112.
 — II., K. of Scots, 205, 208-210, 216. *See also* Bruce, David.
 — ap Griffith, prince of Wales, 180, 181.
 — E. of Huntingdon, 138.
 Deira, 19, 30, 51.
 Denmark, 60.
 Deorham, battle of, 21.
 Derby, 50; earldom of, 175.
 — Edmund of Lancaster, E. of, 175. *See also* Edmund of Lancaster
 — Henry of Lancaster, E. of, 225, 234, 235
See also Henry IV.
 — Stanley, Thomas, first E. of. *See* Stanley.
 Dermot, K. of Leinster, 125.
 Despensers, the, father and son, 202, 203.
 Deva, Roman garrison at, 8, 11. *See also* Chester.
 Diocletian, the Emperor, 10, 12.
Domesday Book, the, 89.
 Dominicans, the, 167, 243.
 Dominic, St., 243.
 Donrémui, 273.
 Dorchester, bishops of, 90.
 Dordogne, the river, 126, 278.
 Douglas, E. of, 258.
 Dover, 142, 151. *See also* Dubrae.
 Dovey, the river, 166.
 Druids, the, 4.
 Drumalban, 22, 24.
 Dublin, 125, 126.
 Dubrae, 11. *See* Dover.
 Dumfries, 196.
 Duns Scotus, schoolman, 245.
 Dunstan, St., abbot of Glastonbury, and archbishop of Canterbury, 53-56.
 Dupplin Moor, battle of, 209.
 Durham, 87, 90, 210.
 — cathedral of, 153.
 Dyvrig, St., bishop of Llandaff, 28.
 EALDGYTH, daughter of Ælfgar, 65.
 Earldoms, of Cnut, 60; of William I., 86-87, of Norman times, 148.
 East Anglia, 19, 27, 28, 40, 43, 51, 60, 77, 90.
 Easterlings, the, 302.
 Eburacum, 9, 11, 12. *See* York.
 Ecgfrith, K. of Northumbria, 35.
 Edgar, the Peaceful, King, 53-55.
 Edgar the Ætheling, 66, 71, 84, 101, 104.
 — K. of Scots, 103.
 Edgecote, battle of, 289.
 Edinburgh, 54, 125, 306.
 Edington, battle of, 44.
 Edith, sister of Athelstan, 52.
 — wife of Edward the Confessor, 62, 64.
 — (Matilda) of Scotland, queen of Henry I., 103. *See also* Matilda.
 Edmund, the Magnificent, King, 52.
 — Ironside, King, 59.
 — son of Henry III., E. of Lancaster, 167, 175, 179, 189.
 — E. of Kent, son of Edward I., 208.
 Edred, King, 52, 53.
 Edward, the Elder, King, 50-51.
 — the Martyr, King, 55-56.
 — the Confessor, King, 61-62, 153, 179.
 — I., 167, 170, 172-176, 178-197, 247.
 — II., 181, 187, 198-204, 240.
 — III., 203, 204, 205-227, 249.
 — IV., 285-294.
 — V., 295, 296.
 — the Black Prince, 214-222.
 — prince of Wales, son of Henry VI., 280, 289, 291.
 Edwin, K. of Northumbria, 30-31.
 — E. of Mercia, 65, 68, 69, 71, 84, 85.
 Edwy, King, 53.
 Egbert, bishop of York, 35.
 — K. of Wessex, 39-40.
 Eleanor, of Aquitaine, queen of Henry II., 115, 126, 127, 137, 138, 139.
 — of Castile, queen of Edward I., 189.
 — of Provence, queen of Henry III., 162, 173.
 — princess of Wales, 179. *See also* Montfort, Eleanor.
 Elizabeth Woodville, queen of Edward IV., 296.
 — of York, queen of Henry VII., 297.
 Ellandune, battle of, 40.
 Eltham, 263.

- Ely, island of, 84, 176.
 — monastery of, 153.
 — Nigel, bishop of, 112, 117.
 Emma, of Normandy, wife of Ethelred II, 58, 59.
 England, the beginnings of, 17
 — united under one king, 51.
 English, the, characteristics of their settlement, 20.
 Entail, law of, 184-185.
 Equity, the Court of, 242 *See* Chancery, Court of.
 Ermine Street, the, 11.
 Essex, Anglo-Saxon kingdom of, 19, 27, 28, 30, 33.
 — shire, of, 77.
 — Geoffrey, Fitzpeter, F. of. *See* Fitzpeter.
 Ethelbald, K. of Mercia, 36.
 — K. of Wessex, 43.
 Ethelbert, K. of Kent, 28-30, 43.
 Ethelburga, of Kent, wife of Edwin of Northumbria, 30.
 Ethelflaed, the Lady of the Mercians, 45, 50.
 Ethelred, K. of Wessex, 43.
 — alderman of the Mercians, 45, 50.
 — II., 56-59.
 Ethelwulf, K. of Wessex, 41-43.
 Eton, 301.
 Eustace, son of King Stephen, 115.
 Evesham, battle of, 174-175.
 Exchequer, the, 107, 117, 147, 241.
 Exeter, 11, 83, 151. *See also* Isca Dumnoniorum.
 — cathedral of, 247.
 FALAISE, treaty of, 125.
 Falkes of Bréanté, foreign adventurer, 161.
 Falkirk, battle of (1295), 194.
 Faroe islands, Norse settlers in, 42.
 Felix, a Burgundian, East Anglia converted by, 33.
 Feudalism, 85-86, 96.
 Fitzalan, Richard, E. of Arundel, 233, 234.
 — Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, called archbishop Arundel, 235, 236, 256.
 Fitzosbern, Wilham, Norman baron, 83.
 Fitzpeter, Geoffiev, E. of Essex, 135, 138, 144.
 Flambar, Ranulf, justiciar, 96, 102, 103.
 Flamborough Head, 239.
 Flamboyant, Gothic, 306.
 Flanders, 193, 211, 216, 305.
Flavia Cæsariensis, 10.
 Flemings, the, 106, 116.
 Flint, surrender of Richard II. at, 237.
 Flintshire, 182.
 Forest Charter, of Henry III., 160.
 Fosse Way, the, 11.
 Fountains abbey, 153.
 France, 115, 119, 126, 129, 186-191, 258.
 Francis, St., of Assisi, 243.
 Franciscans, the, 167, 243-244.
 Franks, the, their settlement in northern Gaul, 14.
 Frederick I., Barbarossa, emperor, 120, 131.
 — II., emperor, 164.
 Free Companies, the, 219.
 French literature in England, 156, 250.
 Friars, the, 242-244.
 Froissart, John, 251.
 Fulford, battle of, 68.
 Byrd, the, military levy of the shire, 78.
 GALGACUS, Caledonian chieftain, 9.
 Galloway, 14, 22, 209.
 Gariannonum, fort of, 14. *See* Burgh Castle.
 Garonne, the river, 217.
 Garter, the Order of the, 217.
 Gascony, 126, 166, 167, 169, 179, 185, 189, 190, 192-194, 206, 222, 278, 280.
 Gauls, the, 5.
 Gaunt, John of, D. of Lancaster, 222, 225-232, 234-236.
 Gaveston, Peter of, E. of Cornwall, 198-199.
 Geoffrey Plantagenet, count of Anjou, 108.
 — count of Brittany, son of Henry II., 127.
 — of Monmouth, wrote *History of Britain*, 106, 107, 153, 156.
 Gerberoy, battle of, 88.
 Germany, 16.
 Ghent, 211.
 Gildas, Welsh monk, his description of Britain, 21.
 Glamorgan, lordship of, 100, 106, 174.
 Glasgow, university of, 307.
 Glastonbury, abbey, 54.
 — lake villages discovered near, 4.
 Glendower, Owen, Welsh leader, 257-259, 262.
 Gloucester, 106, 114.
 — cathedral of, 247.
 — statute of, 184.
 — Gilbert of Clare, L. of, son of Richard of Clare, 170, 174, 176, 248.
 — Gilbert of Clare, E. of, son of the preceding, 199, 201.
 — Humphrey, D. of, 270-277, 304.
 — Richard of Clare, E. of, 169-170.
 — Richard, D. of, 287, 291, 293. *See* Richard III.
 — Robert, E. of, 106, 112-114, 155.
 — Isabella of. *See* Isabella.
 — Thomas of Woodstock, D. of, 225, 233, 234, 235.
 Gloucestershire, included in the kingdom of Wessex, 27.
 Godfrey of Boulogne, K. of Jerusalem, 100.
 Godwin, E. of Wessex, 60-62, 64.
 — house of, 60-63.
 Goidels, the, or Gaelic race, 2, 3.
 Gothic architecture, 153-154, 245-247, 302-303.
 Grand Juries, in England, 123.
Graupius, Mons, 8.
 Great Council, the, 147, 239, 241.
 Great Custom, the, 183.
 Greenland, Norse settlers in, 41.
 Gregory I., the Great, pope, sends missionaries to England, 29.
 — VII., pope, 91, 92. *See* Hildebrand.
 — IX., pope, 163.
 Grey, Sir John, 238.
 — John de, bishop of Norwich, 141.
 — Sir Richard, 295-296.
 — Lord, of Ruthin, 257.
 — Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, 295-296. *See also* Dorset.
 — Walter, archbishop of York, 179.
 Grey Friars, the, 243. *See also* Franciscans.
 Griffith ap Llewelyn, prince of Wales, 65, 166.
 Grosseteste, Robert, bishop of Lincoln, 164.
 Gualo, papal legate, 159.
 Guesclin, Bertrand du, 219, 221.
 Guenne, 126. *See also* Gascony and Aquitaine.
 Guilds, 301-302.
 Gunpowder, use of, 303.
 Gurth, E. of East Anglia, 65, 71.
 Gutenberg, John, printer, 305.
 Guthrum, 44, 45.
 Gwynedd, 106, 117, 124.
 HADRIAN, Emperor, the wall of, 9, 10, 14.
 Haesten, attempts the conquest of Wessex, 48.
 Hamault, 203, 211, 270.
 Hales, Alexander, schoolman, 245.
 Halidon Hill, battle of, 209.
 Hanse Merchants, the, 302.
 Harding, John, chronicler, 304.
 Harfleur, 264, 298.
 Harlech, castle of, 247.

INDEX

- Harold Fairhair, K. of Norway, 41.
 — Harefoot, king, 60, 61.
 — son of Godwin, king, 62-64, 65-71.
 Hardrada, K. of Norway, 68.
 Harthacnut, king, 60, 61.
 Hastings, battle of, 69-71.
 — Lord, 296.
 Heathfield, battle of, 31.
 Heavenfield, battle of, 32.
 Hebrides, the, Norse settlers in, 43.
 Hedgeley Moor, battle of, 287.
 Hengist, traditional leader of the Jutes, 18.
 Hengston Down, battle of, 41.
 Henry I. of Anjou, K. of England, 94, 100, 102-110.
 — II., 115, 116-136.
 — III., 159-177.
 — IV., 225, 234, 235-237, 255-260.
 — V., 260, 262-269.
 — VI., 270-283, 286, 287, 289, 291.
 — VII., 298-299.
 — IV, Emperor, 91.
 — V., 108.
 — VI., 133.
 — of Blois, bishop of Winchester, 111, 114.
 — the young king, son of Henry II., 120, 129.
 — the Lion, D. of Saxony, 129.
 Henryson, Robert, Scots poet, 306.
 Hereford, earldom of, 87.
 — Humphrey, E. of, 193. *See also* Bohun.
 — Henry of Lancaster, D. of, 225, 234, 235, 236. *See also* Derby, E. of, and Henry IV.
 Hereward, Anglo-Saxon leader, 84, 93.
 Hexham, battle of, 287.
 Highlanders, the, 186.
 Highlands, the, 307.
 Hilda, abbess of Whitby, 35.
 Huldebrand, Pope Gregory VII., 91.
 Horsa, traditional leader of the Jutes, 18.
 Hotspur, Harry, 258. *See also* Percy.
 Hougou, Ia, 214.
 House carles, the, 60, 69.
 Hoveden, Roger of, English chronicler, 155.
 Hubei de Burgh, Justiciar, 160-161.
 Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, 131, 137, 140.
 Hugh Capet, king of France, election of, 66, 67.
 Hugh of Avalon, St., bishop of Lincoln, 134, 154, 247.
 Humber, the river, 84.
 Humbleton, battle of, 258.
 Hundred, courts of the, 77, 147.
 Huntingdon, earldom of, 106. *See also* David, E. of.
 Hurstmonceaux, 203.
 Huss, John, Bohemian reformer, 267.
 IBERIANS, the, in Britain, 2, 3.
 Iceland, Norse settlers in, 41.
 Iceni, tribe of the, 8.
 Idle, battle of the, 30.
 Innocent III., pope, 138, 141-143.
 — IV., pope, 164.
 Investiture contest, the, 91, 104-105.
 Iona, abbey of, 24, 28, 32.
 Ireland, 2, 12, 22, 24, 43, 74, 83, 93, 125-127, 159-161, 199, 236, 280, 282.
 Irish, conversion of the, 12.
 Iron Age, the, 3.
 Isabella, of Angoulême, queen of John, 138, 165.
 — of France, queen of Edward II., 203-208.
 — — queen of Richard II., 235, 258.
 — of Gloucester, first wife of King John, 138.
 — daughter of David, E. of Huntingdon, 189.
 Isca, Dumnoniorum, 11. *See* Exeter.
 — Silburn, 8, 11, 12. *See* Caerleon-on-Usk.
 Italy. *See* Rome and Romans.
 JACQUELINE, of Bavaria, wife of Humphrey D. of Gloucester, 271.
 Jacquetta of Luxemburg, wife of John, D. of Bedford, 275.
 James, K. of Scotland, I., 259, 271, 306.
 Jerusalem, 131, 133, 277.
 Jews, the, 150, 185.
 Joan of Arc, 272-273.
 — of Kent, princess of Wales, 225.
 — sister of Edward III., queen of David Bruce, 203.
 John, K. of England, 127, 129, 134, 137-145.
 — K. of France, 217, 218, 219.
 — of Gaunt. *See* Gaunt, John of.
 Judith, niece of William I., 88.
 Jury system, the, 123, 148, 173.
 Justiciar, office of, 96, 107, 112, 117, 134, 144, 147, 162.
 Jutes, the, first Teutonic settlers in Britain, 16, 18.
 KENILWORTH, castle of, 175.
 — *dictum de*, 176.
 Kenneth MacAlpine, K. of Picts and Scots, 24.
 Kent, 18, 27, 28, 30, 40, 77, 231, 279.
 Kentigern, first bishop of Glasgow, 28.
 Kilkenny, statute of, 225.
 Kilwardby, Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, 245.
 King's Bench, the, 241.
 King's College, Cambridge, 301, 303.
 Kirkstall abbey, 153.
 Knighthood, orders of, 249.
 Knights, 148.
 — of the shire, 173.
 LABOUREURS, the statute of, 222, 230.
 Lambeth, treaty of, 160.
 Lancashire, 240.
 Lancaster, earldom of, 175.
 — house of, 201, 225, 255-263, 286.
 — Thomas, E. of, 201, 202.
 — Henry, E. of, 203, 204, 205, 208.
 — — son of above, 216.
See Blanche of, and Gaunt, John of, D. of
 Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, 90-92, 94, 95.
 Langland, William, poet, 252.
 Langton, Stephen, archbishop of Canterbury, 141-142, 144, 160, 161.
 Latimer, Lord, 228.
 Latin literature, 154-156, 250.
 Leicester, 50.
 — earldom of, 163.
 — Robert, E. of, justiciar of Henry II., 117.
 — *See* Montfort, Simon, E. of
 Leinster, Dermot, K. of, 125.
 Leofric, E. of Mercia, 60, 64, 65.
 Leofwine, E. of Kent, 65, 71.
 Leopold, D. of Austria, 133.
 Lewes, battle of, 171-172; the Misc of, 172.
 Lichfield, 33, 37, 38, 76, 90.
 Limerick, 125.
 Limoges, 222.
 Limonsin, the, 219.
 Lincoln, 50, 75, 90, 114; bishop of, 112; castle of, 152; cathedral of, 154, 246; battle of, 160.
 Lindisfarne, 32, 33.
 Lindum, 11. *See also* Lincoln.
 Lionel, D. of Clarence, 225-282. *See* Clarence.
 Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, prince of Wales, 166.
 Llewelyn ap Griffith, prince of Wales, 166, 174, 176, 179-181, 222.
 Loire, the river, 115, 126, 271, 272, 273.
 Lollards, the, 229, 256, 262-263.

- Londinium, 8, 11, 12 *See also* London
 London, 64, 69, 71, 73, 114, 117, 150, 231 243.
 263, 279, 283, 287, 289, 291, 296, 302.
 — treaty of (1359), 218
 Longchamp, William, bishop of Ely and
 chancellor, 132, 134
 Lords Appellant, the, 234, 238, 256.
 Lords Ordainers, the, 199.
 Lorraine, 273.
 — René of, 277
 Losinga, Herbert of, bishop of Norwich, 153.
 Lothian, 54 186, 209.
 Louis, K. of France, VI., 107, 115.
 — — VII., 127.
 — — VIII., 140, 143, 159-160.
 — — IX., 162, 165, 170, 177.
 — — XI., 288, 289, 291, 292
 — of Bavaria, the emperor, 211.
 Lowlanders, the, 186
 Lucy, Richard of, justiciar of Henry II., 117
 Ludlow, 282, 295
 Lusignan, Hugh of, 138 165.
 — house of, 165-166, 170
 Lutterworth, 229
 Lyons, Richard, merchant, 226.

 MAC ALPINE, Kenneth, king of the Scots and
 Picts, 24.
Magna Carta, 144, 151, reissues of, 160, 193.
 Maine (France), 93, 100, 108, 126, 277.
 Mainz, 305
 Maisonnelles, 265
 Malcolm, I., K. of Scots, 52.
 — — III., Canmore, 84, 92, 93, 99.
 — — IV., 117.
 Maletote, the, 193.
 Malmesbury, William of, English chronicler, 155.
Malvoisin, castle built by William II., 95.
 Manchester, 51
 Mandeville, Geoffrey of, E. of Essex, 114.
 Man, Isle of, Norse settlers in, 43.
 Manorial system, the, 149, 150.
 Mans, le, capital of Maine, 93, 101
 Mantes, taken by William I., 93
 March, of Wales, the, 99, 174, 282, 286
 — title of E. of (*see* Mortimer), 208; earldom
 of, 279.
 — Edmund Mortimer, E. of (d. 1381), 225, 226
 — Edmund Mortimer, E. of (d. 1424), 257,
 262, 264
 — Edward of York, E. of, 282, 283. *See also*
 Edward IV.
 — Roger Mortimer, first E. of, 203-208, 225
 Marchers, revolt of the, 174.
 Mare, Peter de la, speaker, 227.
 Margaret, St., queen of Malcolm Canmore, 99, 103.
 — queen of Louis IX., 162.
 — the Maid of Norway, queen of Scots, 187, 188.
 — daughter of David of Huntingdon, 188.
 — sister of Philip IV., empress, 194.
 — of Anjou, queen of Henry VI., 277, 280,
 289, 291.
 — of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV., 288.
 — the lady. *See* Beaufort, Margaret.
 Marshall, the office of, 147.
 — William, E. of Pembroke, 144, 159-160.
 — Richard, E. of Pembroke, 161.
 Martin V., pope, 266.
 Marseilles. *See* Massilia.
 Mary, of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the
 Bold, 232.
 Maserfield, battle of, 32
 Massilia, (Marseilles), the trade of the Britons
 with, 5.
 Matilda of Flanders, queen of William I., 94.
 Matilda of Boulogne, queen of Stephen, 114.
 — d. of Henry I., empress and countess of
 Anjou, 107, 108, 111-115.
Maxima Caesariensis, 10.
 Maximilian I., the emperor, 282.
 Melrose, abbey of, 306
 Mendicant Friars, the, 167, 243.
 Merchant Adventurers, society of the, 302.
 Merchant-guilds, 150.
 Mercia, 19, 27, 35-37, 38, 40, 50, 51, 53, 59, 60,
 61, 65.
 Merioneth, 181
 Merton, Walter of, founder of Merton College,
 Oxford, 245
 Mersson, the river, 217.
 Middle English, 156, 252
 Middlesex, 19, 77
 Mile End, 231.
 Milford Haven, 298.
 Military Orders, the, 154.
 Minories, the, 243. *See also* Franciscans.
 Mirebeau, 139.
 Mohammedans, in Syria, 100, 131.
 Mona, 8. *See* Anglesey
 Monastic orders, 154.
 Monmouth, Geoffrey of, 156
Mons Graupius, battle of, 9
 Montagu (earls of Salisbury) family of, 281, 285
 — John Neville, Marquis of, 291 *See also*
 — Neville John, E. of Northumberland
 Montreau, on the Yonne, 267.
 Montfort, Simon of, E. of Leicester, 163, 166,
 169, 170, 171-177.
 — Eleanor, 179
 — John of, Duke of Brittany, 213, 216.
 Montgomery, lordship of, 100.
 Morcar, E. of Northumbria, 66, 68, 69, 71, 84,
 85, 94
 Mortimer, Roger, of Wigmore, first E. of March,
 203-208, 225
 — Edmund, E. of March (d. 1381), 225, 226
 — Edmund, E. of March (d. 1424), 257, 262,
 264
 — Sir Edmund, 257-258.
 — Anne, 280.
 Mortimer's Cross, battle of, 283.
 Mortmain, Statute of, 188.
 Mowbray, Robert, E. of Northumberland, 95.
 — Thomas, E. of Nottingham, 234, 235; D. of
 Norfolk, 235, 236. *See also* Nottingham and
 Norfolk.
 Mysteries, and Miracle Plays, 304.

 NAJERA, battle of, 221.
 Nancy, battle of, 292.
 Naples, 169
 Nectansmere, battle of, 35.
 Neolithic Age, the, 1
 Netherlands, the, 212, 288, 269, 292, 301, 305.
 Neville, the house of, 281.
 — Richard, E. of Salisbury, 281, 282.
 — Richard, E. of Warwick, 282. *See also*
 Warwick and Salisbury.
 — George, bishop of Worcester and Arch-
 bishop of York, 283, 287, 288, 289.
 — John, E. of Northumberland, and Marquis
 Montagu, 288, 291
 — Cecily, duchess of York, 281.
 — Anne, 288, 289, 293.
 — Isabella, 288, 293.
 Neville's Cross, battle of, 216.
 Newburgh, William of, English chronicler, 155.
 Newcastle, town of, 9.
 New College, Oxford, 301.
 New Forest, the, 87, 101.

- Ninian, St., sent to convert the Caledonians, 12.
 Norfolk, 19, 77.
 — earls of, 87, 193. *See also* Bigod and Mowbray
 Normandy, 43, 48, 63, 64, 83, 88, 93-95, 100-
 104, 108, 111, 114, 116, 126-129, 134, 135, 138-
 140, 169, 213-214, 267, 276, 278.
 Normans, the, 63-64, 69-72, 83-89, 103, 122-123,
 125.
 Northallerton, battle of, 112
 Northampton, Assize of, 123.
 — battle of, 282.
 — council of, 119
 — treaty of, 205, 208
 Northumberland, Henry Percy, E. of, 227, 236,
 258-259. *See also* Percy.
 Northumbria, 19, 27, 30-35, 40, 43, 51-53, 59,
 60, 62, 74, 90.
 Norsemen, migrations of, 40.
 Norway, 187.
 Norwich, 90, 151.
 — cathedral of, 153.
 Nottingham, 50
 — castle of, 208.
 — Thomas Mowbray, E. of, 234, 235. *See*
also Mowbray.
 OCKHAM, William of, schoolman, 245.
 Odo, bishop of Bayeux, 83; E. of Kent, 87, 94, 95
 Offa, K. of Mercia, 36-37.
 Oldcastle, Sir John, Lord Cobham, 262-263.
 Olney, treaty of, 59.
 Ordainers, the Lords, 199, 202.
 Ordinances, the (1312), 199.
 Ordovices, tribe of, the, 8.
 Orléans Bridge, battle of, 180.
 Orkney, Norse settlers in, 42.
 Orleans, siege of, 272-273.
 Orwell, in Essex, 203.
 Oswald, K. of Northumbria, 32.
 Oswiu, K. of Northumbria, 32-33.
 Otto I., the Great, Emperor, 52.
 — IV, Emperor, 139, 140.
 — papal legate, 164.
 Ouse, the river, 172.
 Owen, Gwynnol, prince of Wales, 117.
 — Sir, of Wales, 222.
 — Glendower. *See* Glendower Owen.
 Oxford, 80, 155, 243, 244, 245, 301.
 — Provisions of, 168, 170.
 — University of, 155, 244-245, 301.
 — Robert de Vere, E. of, 232.
 PALÆOLITHIC AGE, the, 1
 Palatine Earldoms, the, 86.
 Palestine, 100, 132, 177.
 Pandulf, papal legate, 142, 160.
 Paris, 189, 211, 219, 244, 289, 275, 276.
 — treaties of 169, 206, 210.
 — the parliament of, 221.
 — Matthew, historian, 250.
 Parliament, the name of, 239.
 — history of, 239-241, 256, 292, 300.
 — the Mad, 168.
 — of 1265, 173.
 — the Model, 191.
 — of York, 202.
 — the Good, 226, 227, 240.
 — the Merciless, 234, 239.
 Paschal II., pope, 105.
 Paston Letters, the, 304.
 Patay, battle of, 273.
 Patrick, St., his conversion of the Irish, 12
 Paulinus, first archbishop of York, 30, 31.
 Paulinus, Suetonius, Roman governor, 9.
 Peasants' Revolt, the, 229-232.
 Peckham, John, archbishop of Canterbury, 184,
 192, 245.
 Pelagius, the opponent of Saint Augustine, 12.
 Pembroke, Palatine earldom of, 100, 103.
 — castle of, 152.
 — Richard, E. of, 125. *See also* Strongbow.
 — Richard Marshall, E. of. *See* Marshall.
 — William Marshall, E. of. *See* Marshall.
 Penda, K. of Mercia, 27-32.
 Percy, house of, 286, 288, 301.
 — Henry, E. of Northumberland, 227, 236,
 258-259. *See also* Northumberland.
 — Henry, Hotspur, 258.
 Perrers, Alice, 226, 227.
 Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, 161.
 — the Cruel, K. of Castile, 219, 221.
 Peterborough, 75, 153, 156
 Petrarch, Italian poet, 251.
 Pevensey, landing of William of Normandy at,
 69. *See* Anderida.
 Philip, I., K. of France, 93
 — II, 129, 132-134, 137, 133, 160.
 — III, 177, 189
 — IV, 189-191, 191-193.
 — VI, 206.
 Philippa of Hainault, queen of Edward III, 203,
 225, 251
 —, Countess of March, d. of Lionel of Clarence,
 225.
 Picquigni, the Treaty of, 292.
 Picts, the, 14, 15, 22, 24.
Piers Plowman, the vision of, 252.
 Pilleth, battle of, 257.
 Plautius, Aulus, Roman general, 8.
 Plymouth, 289.
 Poitevins, the, 161
 Poitiers, capital of Poitou, 126.
 — battle of, 217-218.
 Poitou, 126, 134, 139, 161, 165, 169, 219
 Pole, Michael de la, E. of Suffolk, 233, 234.
 — William de la, E. (afterwards D.), of
 Suffolk, 277-279. *See also* Suffolk.
 Polltax, the (1381), 231.
 Pontefract, 202, 237, 257.
 Pontthieu, 189, 214, 219.
 Popes, the. *See* Gregory I., Gregory VII.,
 Urban II., Clement (anti-pope), Alexander III.,
 Innocent III., Gregory IX., Boniface VIII.,
 Clement V., Urban VI., Clement VII. (Avignon),
 Martin V.
 Portsmouth, 103, 107
Præmunire, statute of, 223.
 Prague, university of, 247
 Prasutagus, K. of the Iceni, 8
 Principality, the, of Wales, 166, 181, 286. *See*
also Wales
 Printing, the invention of, 305-306.
 Privy Council, the, 241.
 Provençals, the, 162-163.
 Provence, 169.
 — René, count of, 277.
 Provisions, papal, 163.
 Provisors, statute of, 223.
 Pyrenees, the, 115, 126
 Pytheas, the voyage of, 5.
 QUITA Emptores statute, 185.
Quo warranto, writs of, 183.
 RADCOR Bridge, battle of, 233.
 Ralph E. of Norfolk, 87-88.
 Randolph, E. of Chester, 114.
 Ranulf Flambard, 96, 102, 103, 107, 153.
 — Glanville, 134
 Ravenspur, 238, 289.
 Reading, Abbey of, Henry I. buried there, 108.

- Redesdale, Robin of, 289.
 Redwald, K. of East Anglia, 28, 30.
Regale, the, 97.
 Reginald, sub-prior of Christchurch, Canterbury, 141.
 Reims, 273.
 Renaissance, the, 307.
 René, D. of Anjou, 277.
 Rhiwallon, Welsh prince, 65.
 Ribblesdale, 287.
 Rich, Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, 161, 164.
 Richard I, King, 127, 129, 131-136
 — II, 222-237.
 — III, 291, 293-298.
 — E. of Cornwall, K. of the Romans, 166, 167, 169, 172.
 — D. of York, son of Richard, E. of Cambridge, 279-283
 — son of Edward IV, 295-296
 Richborough. *See* Rutupiae
 Ripon, 33.
 Rivers, E., Anthony Woodville, 288, 295-296.
 Robert, Fitzhamon, lord of Glamorgan and Gloucester, 106.
 — of Bellême, 103, 104.
 — E. of Gloucester, 106, 112, 113.
 — of Jumièges, archbishop of Canterbury, 63, 64, 68.
 — D. of Normandy, 88, 93-95, 100-104.
 Roche au Moine, la, siege of, 140, 145.
 Roche Denen, la, battle of, 216
 Rochester, 31, 95, castle of, 152
 Rockingham, Council of, 98
 Roger, E. of Hereford, 87-88.
 — bishop of Salisbury, 107, 111, 112.
 — archbishop of York, 120.
 Romans, the, 6, 7-12, 14
 Rome, 29, 98, 99, 119, 143, 163-164, 228. *See also* Popes
 Roncesvalles, pass of, 221
 Roses, Wars of the, 281-297.
 Rouen, 93, 134, 135, 139, 267, 275.
 Rufus's Stone, 101.
 Runnymede, 144
 Rutland, the earl of, 283.
 Rutupiae. *See* Richborough, 14.

 SAINTES, 165.
 Saladin, Sultan, 131.
 Salisbury, 90, 297; cathedral of, 245.
 — Richard Neville, E. of, 281-283.
 Sanchia of Provence, wife of Richard of Cornwall, 166.
 Sandal, castle of, 283.
 Sandwich, 160.
 Savoy, Bona of, 288.
 — Palace, the, 231.
 Savoyards, the, 162-163.
 Sawtre, William, Lollard martyr, 256.
 Saxons, the, 14-16, 18, 19.
 Saxon Shore, Count of the, 14.
 Saxton, 287.
 Scapula, Ostorius, Roman general, 8.
 Scarborough Castle, siege of, 199
 Schism of the Papacy, the Great, 228-229, 266, 267.
 Scone, 192, 196, 209.
 Scotland, 22, 24, 54, 93, 99, 106, 124-125, 188, 195-196, 200-201, 208-210, 283, 287, 306-307.
 Scots, the, 14, 15, 22, 51, 186, 287.
 Scottish Church, the, 12, 29, 32, 33.
 Scottish Succession, claimants to the, 188.
 Scrope, archbishop of York, 259.
 Segrave, Stephen, justiciar, 162.
 Segontium. *See* Carnarvon, 11.
 Seine, the river, 214, 264.
 Severn, the river, 27, 36, 174, 297.
 Severus, Septimus, Emperor, 10.
 Shaw, Doctor, 296.
 Sheriff, office of, 78, 148.
 Shetland, Norse settlers in, 42.
 Shipton Moor, battle of, 259.
 Shire Moot, the, 77, 147
 Shires, the, 77
 Shrewsbury, 57, 103, 104, 131
 — palatine earldom of, 87, 104.
 — treaty of, 176
 — battle of, 258.
 — John Talbot, E. of, 278
 Sicily, 129, 167-169, 277
 Sigismund, the Emperor, 266.
 Silures, tribe of the, 8.
 Simon of Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury, 231.
 Simon, 91.
 Seward, E. of Northumbria, 62, 64, 65.
 Sluys, battle of, 212.
 Smithfield, 231
 Snowdon, 100, 106, 124, 179.
 Solway, the river, Gaelic element in lands around, 3.
 Somersets, John Beaufort, E. of, 260.
 — D. of, 298.
 — Edmund Beaufort, D. of, 277, 280, 281.
 — Edward Beaufort, D. of, 291.
 Somme, the river, 214, 264, 265
 Southampton, 264.
 Stamford, 50, 289
 Stamford Bridge, battle of, 68, 69.
 Standard, battle of the, 112.
 Stanley, Thomas, E. of Derby, 298, 299.
 — William, 298, 299.
 Stephen of Blois, K. of England, 111-115.
 Stewart, the house of, 306-307.
 Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, 64, 68, 90.
 Stirling, 195, 200, 201.
 Stirling Bridge, battle of, 194.
 Stonehenge, megalithic monuments at, 3.
 Stratford, John, archbishop of Canterbury, 213.
 Strathclyde, 21-23, 186.
 Strongbow, lord of Chepstow and earl of Pembroke, 125, 159
 St. Albans, 12, 231, 232
 — abbey of, 37, 250
 — battles of, 281, 283.
 St. Andrews, university of, 307.
 St. Asaph, foundation of the see of, 28.
 St. David's, foundation of the see of, William I. at, 93.
 St. Giles', church of, Edinburgh, 306.
 — Fields, London, 263
 St. Stephen's, at Caen, monastery of, 90, 93.
 Suffolk, 19, 77.
 — Michael de la Pole, E. of, 233-234
 — William de la Pole, E. of, 277-279.
 Surrey, 18, 77.
 Sussex, 18, 27, 28, 33, 77, 279
 Sutherland, Norse settlers in, 42.
 Swegen, king of the Danes, his conquest of England, 58.
 Swynford, Catharine, wife of John of Gaunt, 260.
 Syria, 100.

 Tacitus, his *Life of Agricola*, 9
 Tadcaster, 287.
 Taillebourg, battle of, 165.
 Talbot, John, E. of Shrewsbury, 278.
 Tamworth, royal city of the Mercians, 75.
 Tara, meeting at, 66.
 Tatter-hall, 303.
 Tees, the river, 84.

- Tewkesbury, battle of, 291.
 Thames, the river, 64, 71, 83, 144, 233.
 Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury, 34.
 Thurstan, archbishop of York, 112.
 Tinchebray, battle of, 104.
 Titus Livius, Italian writer, 394.
 Tosng, E. of Northumbria, 62, 65, 66, 68.
 Toulouse, 165.
 — count of, 127, 129.
 Touraine, 126.
 Tournelles, the, attack on, 273.
 Tournaments, 218.
 Tours, 108.
 — the truce of, 277.
 Tower of London, the, 103, 152, 289, 296.
 Towton, battle of, 287.
 Tramecourt, 265.
 Trastámara, Henry of, King of Castile, 219, 221.
 Treasurer, the, 147.
Trébuchet, the, 249.
 Trent, the river, 27.
 Trinovantes, the, 7.
 Troyes, treaty of, 267-268.
 Tudor, house of, 298.
 — Edmund, E. of Richmond, 298.
 — Henry, E. of Richmond, 298-299. *See also* Henry VII.
 — Owen, 298.
 — Jasper, E. of Pembroke, 298.
 Tunis, Crusade of Louis IX. diverted to, 177.
 Turks, the, 100.
 Tyler, Wat, 231.
- ULSTER, 279.
 Universities, the beginnings of, 155, 244, 245.
 Urban II, pope, 98, 100.
 — VI., 228-229.
 Urbicus, Lollius, governor of Britain, 10.
 Usk, the river, 65.
- VALENCE, Aymer of, B. of Winchester, 165, 174.
 — E. of Pembroke, 170, 202.
 — William of, 165, 168, 170.
 Valencia, 10.
 Vallée aux Clercs, 215.
 Venetians, the, 302.
 Vere, Robert de, E. of Oxford, 232.
 Verneuil, battle of, 271.
 Verulamium, 8, 11, 12. *See* St. Albans.
 Vieme, the, dauphin of, 267.
 Villeins, the, 149, 230.
 Vincennes, 268.
 Vinland, Norse settlement in America, 42.
 Viroconium (Wroxeter) Roman garrison at, 8, 11.
 Vorugern, British king, 18.
- WADICOURT, 214.
 Wakefield, battle of, 283.
 — town of, 304.
 Wales, 3, 14, 22, 24, 28, 89, 103, 106, 117, 124-125, 159, 166, 167, 170, 176, 179-182, 240, 257, 283, 297, 299. *See also* Principality, the.
 — Statute of, 181-182.
 Wallace, William, Scottish patriot, 194, 195-196.
 Wallingford, 71.
 — treaty of, 116.
- Walter of Coutances, archbishop of Rouen, 134.
 Waltheof, E. of Huntingdon, 84, 85, 87; E. of Northumberland, 88.
 Walworth, Sir William, 231.
 Warenne, E., 183, 194.
 Warwick, L. of, 199.
 — Thomas Beauchamp, L. of, 234, 235.
 — Richard Neville, E. of, 282, 291.
 — Edward, E. of, 297.
 Watling Street, the, 11.
 Wedmore, the treaty of, 45.
 Welles, Sir Robert, 289.
 Wells, 184.
 Welsh, the, 21, 28, 31, 36, 40, 51, 65, 93, 99, 190, 257-259, 262, 286.
 Wessex, 18, 27, 33, 38, 39, 43-45, 47, 51, 59, 60, 74.
 Westminster, 66, 118, 168, 203.
 — Abbey, 66, 72, 76, 94, 153, 177, 192, 245.
 — 262, 296, 303, 305.
 — Statutes of (Edward I.), 183, 184, 185.
 Westmorland, earldom of, 281, 286.
 West Saxons, shires of the, 77.
 Whirby, Synod of, 33.
 Wight, Isle of, Jewish settlement in, 18.
 Wilfrid, St., of Ripon, 33.
 William I., the Conqueror, 63, 64, 67-72, 82-93.
 — II. Rufus, 94-101.
 — D. of Aquitaine, 101.
 — son of Robert of Normandy, 107.
 — son of Henry I., 107, 108.
 — of Corbeil, archbishop of Canterbury, 111.
 — the Lion, K. of Scots, 125, 132.
 Winchelsea, Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, 192, 193, 195, 201.
 Winchester, royal city of Wessex, 75.
 — statute of, 184.
 — cathedral of, 247.
 — school at, 301.
 Windsor, 257.
 Winwood, battle of, 32.
 Witenagemot, the, 66, 79, 147.
 Woodstock, Thomas of. *See* Gloucester.
 Woodstock, assize of, 124, 160.
 Woodville, Elizabeth, queen of Edward IV., 288, 293-296.
 — family of, 295, 296.
 Worde, Wynkyn de, printer, 306.
 Worms, concordat of, 105, 108.
 Wroxeter. *See* Viroconium.
 Wycliffe, John, reformer, 224, 226-229, 252.
 Wykeham, William of, bishop of Winchester, 226, 234, 247, 301.
- YORK, city of, 11, 68, 75, 150, 287, 304. *See also* Eboracum.
 — archbishops of, 30, 120. *See also* Paulinus, Egbert, Thurstan, Roger, Grey.
 — Walter, Scrope, and Neville George.
 — parliament of, 202.
 — minster, 247.
 — house of, 279-281, 284-299.
 — Richard, D. of, 279-283.
 — Edward, D. of, 283. *See* Edward IV.
 — Richard, D. of, 295-296. *See also* Richard III.
 Yorkshire, 77, 84, 90.
 Ypres, 211.

